



TO THE
Lady *KAYE*.

M A D A M,



OUR Ladyship will observe, that the little Treatise I now humbly lay before you, has been wholly form'd with regard to the Conver-
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sation, which occasion'd it. The Number of excellent Manuals upon the holy Communion, I am sensible is very great; but I have confin'd my self to consider in as rational a Method as I could, what may be generally requisite by way of Preparation to it: Tho' my continual Avocations in Town, and three or four sensible Afflictions, wherewith it has pleas'd God lately to visit me, have contributed to render me less capable of giving this Discourse some Advantages, which possibly it had otherwise receiv'd. I have this End, however, in the Publication of it, that a proper Occasion is hereby given me of testifying to
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the World, how much I owe to your Ladyship's great Goodness and Generosity.

Tho' I cannot omit so fair an Opportunity of mentioning your Ladyship's Inclination in general to Acts of Beneficence, and especially the Zeal and Assiduity wherewith you always promote the Interests of those, whom you have once honour'd with any Expectations of Favour, or the least Share in your Friendship.

It is no Wonder, Madam, if these bright Qualities, in conjunction with an agreeable Person, an easy Manner, and lively Turn of Thought, have render'd your Ladyship's Acquaintance so ge-

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nerally engaging; and that they think themselves most happy, who are most intimately acquainted with you.

As to the principal Design of this small Tract, it is, as I have already intimated, to specify the several Duties preparative to the Lord's Supper, and to enforce the Practice of them. And tho' I would by no means encourage any Person to communicate without due Preparation, yet I am far from thinking the Forms prescribed in some Books on this Subject, necessary to all Persons, or that without a Weeks Preparation, a Christian is unqualify'd to appear at the Lord's Table.

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In the first Ages of the Church, when the Faithful communicated every Day, such a Condition had been in the Nature of it impracticable, and all the true Disciples of Christ will endeavour to be in the same habitual Disposition to communicate, which Christians were then in. I do not speak this to discountenance any thing that may tend to promote real Piety, but as a Caution against the common Pretences for not communicating on account of the many Affairs and Distractions of Life, or from Want of Time.

Madam, I am very apprehensive after all, it was not necessary

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cessary for me to treat of this Subject for your Ladyship's Information: What I had a particular Respect to in the Composition, was the Benefit of your young Daughter, whom you have been all along so careful to form upon the Principles of Piety, as well as to adorn with all the external Accomplishments proper to her Age and Sex, and wherein she has already made considerable Advances.

But the Care, Madam, concerning a pious and polite Education of Children, was so admirably exemplify'd to you in the Conduct of the late Lady Marow, that did not your own Inclination and Judgment

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ment determine you upon it in both Regards, you could not possibly be unmindful of so very bright a Precedent in either.

It is particularly observ'd by the Lord Bishop of Litchfield, in his elegant and just Character of that pious Lady, that in discharging this Part of her Duty, She had ingenuous Minds to deal with. This made me naturally reflect on that tender and happy Disposition, you are so continually taken up in cultivating, and wherein all the Principles of Goodness and Ingenuity have so early, and eminently, discover'd themselves.

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But your Ladyship is not more punctual and exact in performing the Duties of your Maternal, than those of your Conjugal Relation. I have never observ'd, (and I have been honour'd with very frequent Opportunities of confirming what I say) a more remarkable Tenderness and Complaisance, under that sacred Tye, than on the Part of your Ladyship; tho' I have not been able at any time to distinguish what was to be attributed to a Sense of Duty, and what to your Inclination. In Return, Madam, you are equally happy in the Love and Esteem of a Gentleman, who merits the Love and Esteem of all Persons,

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Persons, and in particular of those, whom he has so well and so faithfully represented.

I have only to add my Prayers for your Ladyship's Health and Happiness, in all your Relations, and in every Respect, and to profess my self, with the greatest Deference,

M A D A M,

Your Ladyship's

Most humble and

Most obedient Servant,

R. FIDDES.

ERRATA.

PAge 77. l. 13. Instead of *some of the most common Prejudices*, read *One Prejudice, upon which Men may be apt to excuse themselves from receiving the Lord's Supper, particularly obviated.*



A
PREPARATIVE
TO THE
Lord's Supper.

CHAP. I.

*The Nature of the Lord's Supper
consider'd.*



HA T we may have more
clear and distinct Notions
concerning this Holy Sa-
crament, I shall endeavour
to represent, in the best Light I can, the
Nature of it, separately, from the Rea-
sons,

sons upon which it was instituted ; and to that end shall describe it in the following Terms.

“ *The Lord’s Supper* is a holy Feast,
 “ of his own Appointment, to be cele-
 “ brated in his Church, by eating of
 “ Bread, and drinking of Wine, until his
 “ second coming to judge the World.

The Lord’s Supper is to be consider’d under the Notion of a *Feast*, or publick-Entertainment. It has been a Custom throughout the World, to institute Feasts in Memory of some extraordinary Action or Event ; but especially upon solemn Occasions, when Men have offer’d Sacrifice, Feasting has been a common and ordinary Rite both among *Jews* and *Gentiles*.

This Rite, among the *Gentiles*, is refer’d to in that Caution given by *Moses*, *Exod. xxxiv. 15.* *Lest thou make a Covenant with the Inhabitants of the Land, and do sacrifice unto their Gods, and one call thee, and thou eat*
 of

the Lord's Supper.

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of his Sacrifice. And that it was customary in the time of Saint *Paul*, for the Heathen to feast upon their Sacrifices, is evident from several Passages of his Writings. This is the Ground of what he declares in particular to the *Corinthians*, 1 *Ep.* x. 21. *Ye cannot drink the Cup of the Lord, and the Cup of Devils; ye cannot be Partakers of the Lord's Table, and the Table of Devils.*

The Practice of the *Jews*, on proper Occasions of their doing Sacrifice, appears from that one Passage concerning the Sacrifice which was to be blessed by *Samuel*, and not to be feasted on, till it had received his Benediction. *The People will not eat until he come, because he doth bless the Sacrifice, and afterwards they eat that he bidden.* 1 *Sam.* ix. 13. But the *Pas-*
fover, a more special and direct Type of the Sacrifice of *Christ*, and to whom the same Denomination is therefore

given, 1 Cor. v. 9. was observed among the *Jews* by feasting on a Lamb, according to several Rites and Ceremonies prescrib'd by God himself to that End. Immediately after Christ, *the Lamb of God slain from the Foundation of the World*, had abolish'd that Institution, he appointed a Supper, to be kept as a standing Memorial of his own perfect Sacrifice upon the Cross; by virtue of which alone, the Passover, and all other Sacrifices whatever, were of any Significancy towards the Pardon of Sin, or the Reconciliation of Sinners to God.

It is *a holy Feast*. A Feast which in the Original and great Design of it was founded by our blessed Saviour upon Reasons of Piety and Religion; which we must therefore approach and solemnize after such a manner, as may visibly testify a due Regard to these Ends, and our Zeal for promoting them. So that notwithstanding the

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the Lord's Supper. 5

Acts of Praise and Thanksgiving, which are naturally Concomitants of Joy, wherewith this holy Feast ought to be celebrated, we must comport our selves at it in the most attentive, the most grave and devout manner.

It has indeed been objected against the Strictness and Solemnity of Behaviour wherewith we usually appear at the Lord's Table, that the very Nature of a Feast supposes a more open, free, and disengag'd Manner. *A Feast*, says Solomon, *is made for Laughter, and Wine maketh merry*, Eccles. x. 19. This Account concerning the Design and End of Feasting is very natural, with respect to the ordinary Entertainments in Civil Life: And had the Lord's Supper been only design'd as a Sacrifice of Praise and Thanksgiving in Memory of his Death, what is here pretended, would have had some greater Appearance at least of a reasonable Foundation. But when we consider farther,

that this holy Sacrament was not merely instituted for a continual Remembrance of the Death of Christ, but as a *fæderal* Rite to confirm the Benefits of it to humble and *contrite* Sinners ; under this Notion of it, which ought never to be separated from the other, we cannot approach the Lord's Table with too high Sentiments of Piety, or too profound Expressions of an *external* Reverence.

What is here said is a sufficient Vindication of the Judgment of our Church, in the pious and excellent Disposition it has made towards our receiving the holy Sacrament, after a manner suitable to the Dignity and *Sacredness* of it ; and particularly by requiring us to receive it on our Knees : *Kneeling* being a Posture, in the ordinary and stated Signification of it, of all others the most humble, and whereby we at once most sensibly acknowledge our own Demerits, and the most awful Regard
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to those, before whom we present. our selves. It is true, this was not the Posture wherein the Apostles of our Lord first communicated; He might out of his great Condescension, and the Circumstances he was then in, treat them with a Familiarity, upon which it does not now become us, and in his State of Exaltation, to presume. Besides, while we consult and pursue the Ends of any Institution, it is not necessary that we should observe all the particular Circumstances, which first occasionally attended the Observance of it. If it were, we ought not to communicate at the Lord's Table, but after Supper, in an upper Room, and where the Number of Communicants should never exceed thirteen. Nay, if we were to argue from all the Circumstances wherewith this holy Banquet was first celebrated, we must neither partake of it in a kneeling, nor a sitting, but in a recumbent or leaning Posture. Tho' this being one of those

Arguments, which if it prove any thing, must, even in the Opinion of those who urge it, prove too much; I need add nothing farther in disproof of it.

And yet I do not know whether the Disorders which *St. Paul* complains of among the *Corinthians* in his Time, when they met together to communicate at the Lord's Table, did not proceed from the Prejudice I have taken occasion to mention: It seems from the Intemperance and Excess they gave themselves up to in their Love-Feasts, which were constantly then prepar'd before they receiv'd the Lord's Supper; that they look'd upon it as little more than an Entertainment of Festivity and Mirth, without regard to those holy and spiritual Affections wherewith they ought to have come qualify'd for the Reception of it. Upon this Account the Apostle charges them with not *discerning the Lord's Body*, or not putting a Difference between the manner
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of their appearing and feasting at the Lord's Table, and at any common friendly Repast, where they might think it more allowable, at least more decent, to discover a Temper less reserv'd, and indulge their Appetites to a greater Liberty.

Of his own Appointment. All Appointments of our Ecclesiastical Superiors, wherever the Superiority of the Ecclesiastical Power is lodg'd, have in effect the Force of a Divine Command to us; provided they really tend to the Edification of the Church, and the Advancement of true Piety and Religion. I do not know any Truth more incontestable, except to Persons whose Religion principally consists in raising continual Scruples, and in a Resolution never to be satisfy'd with the clearest Answers to them. But in the present Argument we have not only the Reason of the thing evidently on our side, but the Authority of our blessed Lord

himself: And in particular, to mention no other Instances of his complying with the Rites of the Jewish Church, by his observing their Feast of the Dedication, tho' it had no Sanction from any positive Order of God.

Yet even in Divine Establishments, tho' every one of them does indispensably oblige the Conscience, some of them may still carry a more direct Authority and greater Force, in regard to the Divinity of the Person who delivers them, or to certain extraordinary Circumstances, on occasion whereof they are deliver'd. We are, upon both Considerations, under the strongest Engagements faithfully to observe our Saviour's Institution of the holy Sacrament. The Apostle, to make the *Corinthians* more sensible of the notorious Scandal and Profanation wherewith they were charged, for communicating after so unworthy a manner at this holy Feast, reminds them that no less a Per-
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son than the Lord himself was the Founder of it. And to give what he said the stronger Impression, he cites our Saviour's Authority for it in repeated Terms. *I have, says he, received of the Lord, that which I also deliver'd unto you, That the Lord Jesus, the same Night in which he was betrayed, took Bread: And, when he had given Thanks, he brake it, and said, Take, eat, this is my Body which is broken for you: This do in Remembrance of me. After the same manner also He took the Cup, when he had supped, saying, This Cup is the New Testament in my Blood: this do ye, as oft as ye shall drink it, in Remembrance of me. 1 Cor. xi. 23, 24, 25.* What St. Paul here declares concerning this Divine Ordinance upon the Testimony of a particular Revelation, perfectly agrees with the History of it recorded by the Evangelists.

The Circumstances which attended this Institution afford us also very pow-

erful Motives to enforce the Observance of it. Our blessed Saviour left it in charge to his Disciples immediately before his Death. Now there is something so solemn, and which we are even apt to look upon as sacred, in the last Will of a dying Friend, tho' what he recommends to us be only in the way of Request, that we apprehend our selves under an Obligation to execute it, which cannot upon any Pretence be easily dispens'd with. It was given us in Command by our dying Lord; when he was going to suffer Death *for our sakes*. This is a Circumstance of so strong and peculiar a Force, that it may seem incapable of being farther enforc'd by any additional Consideration. For *greater Love than this hath no Man, that he lay down his Life for his Friend*.

And yet what the Apostle particularly observes, by a special Direction of the Spirit of God, that this Com-
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mand was given by our Lord, *in the same Night that he was betrayed*, imprints still upon our Minds a more lively and powerful Sense of his Love towards us. For what manner of Love was this, the Current whereof ran so strong, that so many and great Obstacles would not put a Stop, or give the least Diversion to it? The base, the treacherous, and which included every other Crime, the ungrateful Usage our Saviour met with in Return of all his past Favours, was so far from making him repent of them, that he takes the very Occasion of his being *betray'd*, to shew the invincible Force of his Love, wherewith he loved Mankind, and appoints a solemn Rite of summing up and conveying all his Favours, as it were, in one to them. This was a Love, in the visible Effects of it, so wondrous and surpassing, that we may justly term it not only stronger *than Death*, but than the most lively and
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powerful Sense of all the grievous, provoking Circumstances, under which an innocent Person can be supposed to die.

To be celebrated in his Church. The Church of Christ is a Society of Persons professing Christianity, form'd upon those Rules and Constitutions which he has prescrib'd for the Government of it, by Persons, to whom he has given Authority to that End. For the Church of Christ must be suppos'd a *regular Society*, both in regard to his Wisdom, and the Characters whereby it is describ'd in Scripture, of a *Household*, a *Building*, and a *City*. But there can be no Order where there is no Government; and there can be no regular Government, where proper Persons are not authoriz'd and appointed to govern.

From the Principles here laid down, these two following Propositions, I take it, may be evidently deduc'd.

I. That

1. That none but Persons professing Christianity, have a Right to the Privileges of the Christian Church, or *Society*; especially such Privileges as are peculiar to it, and distinguish it from all other Societies.

2. That no Persons, tho' they do profess Christianity, can yet lay claim to those Privileges, if they do not conform to the Rules which Christ has prescrib'd for the Conveyance of them, by a due and competent Authority.

The former of these Propositions will not be disputed. Nothing appears plainer, than that a Right to the Privileges of any Society, consider'd as a Society, can only belong to the Members of it, or to such Persons at least as are qualify'd and desirous to be admitted into it, by those who have a Power of admitting them. It is no less universally agreed, that a Right to partake of the Lord's Supper, is one of the most eminent and distinguishing Privileges

vileges of the Christian Church, and that there ought to be proper Persons authoriz'd to administer it. But the great Question arises upon the second Proposition;

Whether, in certain Cases, it may not be lawful for Christians to partake of the holy Sacrament from the Hands of those, who yet have no Authority to administer it, according to the Rules prescrib'd by Christ for the Government of his Church, and the Powers, wherewith the Governors of it were first invested?

The Members of the Church of *England*, if I mistake not, do generally, if not almost universally, hold this Question in the negative. They think no Person, upon any Pretence whatever, can take upon him to dispense the Privileges of a Society, but in Conformity to the Laws which constitute it a Society; whereby it ought to be govern'd; by virtue of which the Governors

nors of it originally acted, and have since transmitted successively to others, the Powers which they then receiv'd.

But if notwithstanding contrary to all Rule, and in Contempt of all just Authority, Men will still pretend a Power of administering either of the holy Sacraments; tho' their Administrations were not to be consider'd merely as so many solemn Nullities, we cannot however but look upon them in the most favourable Light, as highly sacrilegious and irregular.

How far God may dispense with the Breach of his own Ordinances, we do not presume to determine. *Secret things belong to him.* It is our Part to judge concerning the Nature of Things from what is reveal'd, and according to the most reasonable Appearances of them. But we do not limit the Mercy of God, with respect to those who have broke into the Constitution of his Church, or continue in such

such a Breach through Ignorance; or in Case, (if ever there was such a Case in the World) of invincible Necessity; especially where People do not offend of malicious Wickedness, God, who best knows the Defects of their several Capacities, the Strength of their Prejudices, and the Simplicity of their Hearts, may be graciously inclin'd to make those Allowances to them in the Violation of his Ordinances, which Men cannot make. And this is as far as Charity can go, or we have any Grounds in Reason, or any Authority from Divine Revelation to extend it.

But still we say, the Sacraments ought only to be administred by Persons duly authoriz'd; that 'tis the safest way for us to receive them from the Hands of such Persons; and that when we receive them from the Hands of those whom we have any Cause of suspecting not to be so authoriz'd, we may

may be justly suspected of wanting both Piety and Prudence our selves.

It is the more necessary to rectify the Judgments of Men in this Matter, from the Attempts which of late have been so vigorously made, towards destroying the Rights of the Ministerial Function, by supposing that they do not depend upon any divine positive Institution of Christ, but upon the arbitrary Will of the Civil Magistrate; who has therefore Power to create, to alter, and supersede; and for the same Reason, if the good of the State so require, even to annihilate them.

It has upon this Principle been laid down as a Maxim, that *The Clerk has as good a Right to administer the Sacrament as the Parson.* So, out of a particular Regard to the *legal* Minister, (for in their Account he is no other) the Enemies of our Order are pleased to style him; tho' the Word consider'd in it self, is not attended with the Idea
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of Contempt which they have endeavour'd to fix upon it, more out of Ignorance it is to be hoped, than a pre-pense Malice. In the later Attacks which have been made on the Rights of Christianity, and of the sacred Order in particular, tho' a greater Decency has been observ'd, and Men have learn'd to express themselves in softer and more distant Terms; yet the general Design of subverting all Order and Government in the Church, and reducing it to a precarious State, which if a special Providence of God should not interpose, would by degrees prepare the Way for introducing at the best a more refin'd Heathenism: This Design, I say, is still carry'd on with the same Application and Sedulity as ever.

I am far from exhibiting this Charge against any Persons, but those who are immediately concern'd, in contributing by their Writings or Discourses to facilitate

litate the Execution of so pernicious a Design; and which it is extremely difficult, upon any Principle of Charity, to reconcile with the pompous Professions they make, of a Concern for promoting the real Interests of Christianity. Is it uncharitable to suppose, that what these Men have principally in view, is to offer an acceptable Sacrifice to the secular Powers? which yet those Powers ought not, even upon secular Considerations to accept: Since, to mention no other obvious Reasons for what I say, the abolishing Christianity, to which their Schemes directly tend, would take away the strongest and most powerful Supports of Civil Government, which can be contriv'd for the Preservation and Security of it.

But lest what I have here advanced, should be thought as precarious as the dangerous Notions here condemn'd, it may not I hope be amiss, on so important an Occasion, in as few Words as

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possible, to expose the Falshood and Unreasonableness of them. And,

1. This Principle, That the Ministerial Powers are deriv'd from the State, is directly contrary to the publick *Judgment* of that particular Constitution, under which we live, (*Artic. of Rel. 37.*) whereby Secular Princes are excluded the Office of *ministring either God's Word, or of the Sacraments*. The Right therefore of exercising which Office, Queen *Elizabeth* in her Injunctions more expressly disclaim'd. But nothing, I conceive, can be more plain, than that a Power deriv'd from another Person must be eminently, or however virtually vested in that Person. For it is impossible for any one to communicate what he has not.

Saul in particular did not consult as he ought to have done upon this Hypothesis, what was owing to his Supremacy as Head of the *Jewish Church*. For he excuses himself for having taken
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upon him to offer Sacrifice in the Absence of *Samuel*, upon Pretence of Necessity, 1 *Sam.* xiii. 11, 12. which was in effect disowning all other Pretensions to that Office. But that he had none, appears from the immediate Denunciation of God's Judgment upon him, which terminated in the Loss of his Royal Dignity to himself and to his House for ever. Here we may observe in Fact an independent Right of the Ecclesiastical, from that of the Civil Power. And if this be acknowledg'd, as there seems no way of evading the Concession of it, to those who believe the Scriptures, then there is an end at once of the Contradiction, which the Independency of those two Powers is said to imply. For a Contradiction can never be imply'd in supposing that what has been may be.

2. If it be true that the Ecclesiastical Government, as instituted by our Saviour, is alterable at the Discretion
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of the Civil Magistrate, it is impossible to form any clear or distinct Idea concerning the Unity of his Church. For upon this Principle, it will not be one Society, but as many as the several Christian Princes in the World may think fit to mould it into. Instead then of a regular compact Building, as the Scriptures suppose the Church, it would be much more natural to represent it by an incoherent Heap of unform'd Stones, and without any thing to cement them: Or instead of a City which is at Unity with it self, as the Church is prophetically describ'd, it would be only a confus'd Multitude, or shall I call them, Medley of Christians, without any visible Sign that Christianity was ever design'd by the Author of it, as a wise and regular Institution. The Enemies of our *Sion* would then have some more reasonable Pretence, *As they pass by, to clap their Hands at us, to hiss and wag their Heads at*

the Daughter of Jerusalem, saying, Is this the City, Men call the Perfection of Beauty? Lam. ii. 15.

As to the Plea of Necessity for the Administration of the Sacraments in Churches, (I speak the common Dialect) where the Administrator has no regular or authentick Commission; admitting, I say, that Necessity is in some Cases *above all Rules*, yet this Maxim ought not to hold in such Cases, where there is no absolute Necessity for the thing it self, in order to which the Rule is dispens'd with. Now the Doctrine of the Church concerning the Sacraments, is, that they are *generally necessary to Salvation*; and therefore where they are administred by a proper Authority, there lies a Necessity upon all Persons duly qualify'd to receive them; but where they are not so administred, that Necessity ceases, and the Obligation founded upon it is discharg'd. An involuntary Omis-

sion, arising from a reasonable Fear of offending God, is certainly preferable to an unlawful, offensive Usage of any Divine Ordinance whatever. We may farther add, that since the Sacraments do not operate by any natural Efficiency, but purely as they are of God's Institution; to apply them contrary to his Institution, is in effect to apply nothing; nothing, that his Grace or Benediction can be supposed to accompany.

If it be said, that the Case is alter'd from what I have represented it, when a Society of Christians are once grown up to a regulated Constitution, tho' the Methods of establishing it were from the Beginning *out of all Rule*; I shall only answer, that this way of arguing seems to convey as much Light to one's Mind, as if it should be said, the higher you raise a crooked Pillar, the straighter it will grow, and a greater Number of Persons may stand upon it with

with more Safety, tho' it stand upon no regular Foundation it self.

I mention these things to shew, how much it concerns us to take Care, that we may receive the holy Sacraments in that Communion of Christ's Church, where we are assur'd they are administer'd by Persons duly authoriz'd. But above all, that we should be cautious how we partake in those Administrations of them, which are perform'd in direct and avow'd Opposition to the *lawful Authority*, and even without the very Pretence of Necessity.

It is really strange, that those who separate from the Communion of the Church, and are so very tender and scrupulous in Cases of little Importance, should yet in a Case of so near Concernment to them, as that relating to the Administration of the holy Sacraments, be easy and unconcern'd, as if it were wholly indifferent on which side of the Question they should deter-

mine themselves. If Men have in reality tender Consciences, why do not they discover their Doubts where there is visibly most Reason for them, and where an Error is certainly of the most dangerous Consequence to them ?

I am sensible the Principles here laid down, will be thought by some Persons harsh and uncharitable; and that there are some very hard Consequences which appear to follow from them. In answer to which, I shall only beg leave to recite what I have said on another Occasion ; “ That no Man, or
“ Society of Men, is answerable for
“ any Consequences of an Opinion,
“ provided the Opinion it self be true
“ and well-grounded. — If we pass
“ no Judgment upon the Errors of
“ Men, but what the Scriptures authorize, it is not our Fault, that
“ great Numbers are carry’d away with
“ them. To suppose Uncharitableness
“ in such a Judgment, is to bring the
Charge

“ Charge of it against the Scriptures,
“ not against us, who are to judge by
“ the Rules of it.

By Eating of Bread, and Drinking of Wine. Bread is the most strong and ordinary Support of the animal Life, and therefore a proper Emblem of that spiritual and salutary Food in the holy Sacrament, whereby the Life of the Soul is sustain'd. It is also a most *simple* Food, and in this respect too was wisely appointed by our Saviour, a Part of our Entertainment at a Feast, which was principally instituted not to gratify our bodily Appetites, but for sacred and religious Ends.

But Drink being no less necessary than Meat, towards supporting the Life of the Body; our Saviour, to represent to us the Efficacy of the holy Sacrament in all respects towards our spiritual Nutriment, and Growth in Grace, has appointed Wine for the other Part or Ingredient, whereof his Supper is to

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be compos'd. And this Appointment seems very agreeable both to those figurative Expressions whereby Jesus Christ is represented, as the *true Vine*, *John* xv. 1. and the *Wine-press of his Father's Wrath*; *Is.* lxiii. 2. and also to the Nature and Quality of Wine, the *Blood* of the Grape, which is proper to refresh and exhilarate the Spirits; as the Blood of Christ shed upon the Cross, and communicated to us in the holy Sacrament, is to revive and comfort poor disconsolate Sinners.

Until his second coming to judge the World. Upon the Institution of the Passover, God declares to the People of the *Jews* by *Moses*; *This Day shall be to you for a Memorial, and you shall keep it a Feast to the Lord throughout your Generations; you shall keep it a Feast by an Ordinance for ever.* That is, according to the usual Import of the Phrase in the Old Testament, so long as the Jewish

ish Dispensation should continue in Force : But since it is expir'd, and the Lord's Supper, the Christian Passover, has been instituted in Memory of Christ's Sacrifice upon the Cross, as the Jewish Passover was by way of typical Reference to it : This Memorial is to be observ'd, from Parity of Reason, by all Christians, in all succeeding Ages to the End of the World. Our Lord indeed has not particularly determin'd, tho' I shew afterwards the Apostle *St. Paul* has, how long this divine Ordinance should continue to oblige. But this can be no Argument against the Perpetuity of it ; for where a Command in general is given, and without Limitation of Time, so long as the Reasons of it's continuing in Force do not cease, but the Power of them is rather evidently augmented, so long such a Command is certainly obligatory. But what is here observed, will receive a more particular Confirmation, from what I

am in the next Place proceeding to consider.

CHAP. II.

The Ends for which the Lord's Supper was instituted.

A Great Number of positive Commands in the Old Testament, seem to have had no other Foundation than in the arbitrary Will and Appointment of God. Upon which Account the Prophet, in his Name, expressly calls them *Statutes, that were not good*; or that had no' intrinsick Goodness, abstractedly consider'd, to recommend them; but were only design'd as *Essays and Tests* of Obedience to a People delighting in a pompous, exteriour Religion; and continually discovering an Inclination to *mingle with the Heathen* round about them, *and to learn their Works*; from which the Prophets, after

after all their Remonstrances, yet found it so very difficult to restrain them.

Instead of those numerous, and in several Instances, expensive Rites, wherewith the Jewish Dispensation was charg'd, and which St. *Paul* therefore most significantly stiles *The Law of carnal Commandments*; a Law chiefly, if not wholly enacted, in regard to the particular Disposition and State of that People; our Saviour instituted a Religion of a more sublime spiritual Nature, and wherein he has been pleased to require nothing of us, but a *reasonable Service*, nothing but what appears at least, in the natural Propriety of it, to have had a *reasonable* Foundation. So that even the few positive Commands of the Gospel, and therefore not antecedently binding in their own Nature, yet now that they are given us in Charge, must be confess'd to have a more *obliging* Force, from a particular Tendency and Aptitude in them, to

promote the Ends for which they were appointed. And this will appear more evidently from what I am going to observe, with respect to the Institution of the Lord's Supper. For,

I. It was instituted, and upon a special Reason assign'd by our Lord himself, in Commemoration of his Death. Now, though we have in the Gospel the Circumstances which attended his Death, and his Sufferings which preceded it, describ'd in a very moving and particular manner; yet the Minds of Men are not so much influenc'd by naked and bare Descriptions, how lively soever, as by sensible Representations. It is for this Reason we so carefully preserve the Tokens and Bequests of our absent or deceas'd Friends; not that we are otherwise in Danger wholly of forgetting them, but when we look upon these visible Pledges of their Love, we are apt to be more powerfully affected with the Remembrance of them.

In

In Condescension to the present imperfect State of human Nature, and
“ to the End that we should alway
“ remember the exceeding great Love
“ of our Saviour in dying for us, and
“ the innumerable Benefits which by
“ his precious Blood-shedding, he
“ hath obtain'd to us, he has institu-
“ ted holy Mysteries, as Pledges of
“ his Love, and for a continual Re-
“ membrance of his Death. For here-
by we not only apprehend with a
stronger Eye of Faith, his last Con-
flicts and dying Agonies for us, but a
fresh and lively Scene of them is even
open'd to the Eye of Sense. His Blood
is again shed, and his Body broken be-
fore us; and the blessed Symbols of
his Love are put into our Hands, in
order to our feasting upon them, and
recounting with him over again the
finishing Labours and Triumphs of it.
So, that in the most strict and literal
Sense, we may be said to *taste and*

see how good, and gracious the Lord is.

And if the Lord's Supper was instituted to the End, that the Memory of his Death might be better preserv'd, it will follow by evident Consequence, that the longer we are remov'd from the Time of his Death ; the greater Reason there still is, why this Institution should continue in force. For Matters of Fact naturally make the greatest Impression, while they are fresh in the Minds of Men ; and at the Time they are done, or immediately after ; the more distant Situation we are placed in from them, they are seen more imperfectly, and even what we see of them less sensibly affects us. There cannot, I think, be a more demonstrative Proof, that there is the same Reason for perpetuating this Institution of our Lord, which there was originally for making it. I may add, that the Reason for observing it holds stronger

stronger in the respect I have mention'd, and will do so in all succeeding Ages, than it held in the apostolical Age it self.

What I have remark'd may be of use to obviate the Error of certain Enthusiasts, who under pretence of greater Light, and a more perfect Dispensation of Grace, decry all external Rites of Religion, as weak and beggerly Elements; and in particular take upon them to assert, that the Lord's Supper was at the most but a temporary Ordinance (for that they are compell'd to allow) and which he design'd should continue but for a very short Period.

In order to support this Error, they cite the Words of St. *Paul*, 1 *Cor.* II. 26. *For as often as ye eat this Bread, and drink this Cup, ye do shew the Lord's death till he come.* That is, according to their Exposition, either till he come by his Spirit to enlighten
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the Minds, and sanctifie the Hearts of his Disciples ; or else till he come in Judgment to take Vengeance on the obstinate and rebellious *Jews*. But if the Words, as I shall prove, cannot be taken in either of these Senses (and there is no other Sense but the true one, that can with any Pretence be put upon them) then this Apostle by the coming of Christ, must be understood concerning his second coming to judge the World, and consequently as prescribing a Duty of perpetual Obligation to Christians till that Time.

Now, as to the former of these Explications, supposing it agreeable to the phraseology of Scripture, yet it can be no Advantage in this Place to the Persons who urge it ; because the Promise of sending the Holy Spirit had been already accomplish'd ; and particularly, in a very eminent and extraordinary Manner to the Apostle himself, at the Time of his giving Directions

rections to the Church of *Corinth*, for the more regular and worthy participation of this holy Sacrament.

As to the other Sense of our Lord's coming, it is altogether precarious, and without any reasonable Grounds to support it. But in case too it were favour'd by any similar Expression in Scripture, we ought not barely for that Reason to admit it against the plain and incontestable Rule already appeal'd to; with the Recital of which I shall conclude this Article; (*viz.*) Where the Reason of any positive Command continues, the Obligation of it, if not superseded by the commanding Authority, must of necessity continue also.

2. The Lord's Supper was not only instituted as a Sign or Memorial of his Death, but as a foederal Rite or Seal to ratifie and conveigh all the Benefits of it to the worthy Receiver. In Confirmation whereof I shall not enter upon
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on a nice critical History about the Practice of solemnizing Covenants, civil or religious, in the way of feasting; but shall only produce two Authorities to this End, out of the holy Gospel. The first is from those Words of our blessed Saviour himself, *Mark* xiv. 23. *This is my Blood of the New Testament*, or as the Original properly imports, of the *New Covenant*. The natural Construction therefore of which Words, and most agreeable to our Saviour's Design in them, seems to be this; that whatever Promises have been made on his Part, or whatever Conditions he has obtain'd of the Father in our Behalf, they shall be effectually made good to us, by our partaking sacramentally of his *Blood*, provided we come to his Table duly qualify'd, and faithfully endeavour to perform what is required on our own Part. For all Covenants, in their primary Signification, imply a mutual Engagement
between

between the Parties, concluded by them.

The other Authority is that of St. Paul, where he puts the Question, (1 Cor. x. 16.) *The Cup of Blessing which we bless, is it not the Communion of the Blood of Christ; the Bread which we break, is it not the Communion of the Body of Christ?* It is impossible, in the Nature of Things, that the real Body of Christ, according to the Doctrine, whether of the *Papists* or *Lutherans*, should be communicated in the Lord's Supper. There are so many Contradictions, as to this Article, on each Side, that 'tis hard to determine which Side is loaded with more; tho' indeed upon a Concession, that either Doctrine, take which of them you please, may be true, they both may be true, and at the same time both false. For there cannot be a greater Contradiction in supposing this, than in saying that a thing may be and may not

not be at the same time ; or that one individual Body may yet be two distinct Bodies in the same Place.

It is impossible for Men to prove any thing true or false, who are capable of assenting to such contradictory Propositions. And yet admitting they could in general be assented to, the Communion of the Body of Christ in a strict and proper Sense, of that Body which suffer'd upon the Cross, and is now in Heaven at the right Hand of God ; The Communion, I say, of our Lord's Body, even in this Sense, would not answer to the Question or Argument of *St. Paul* in the Words recited. For he is not here representing the Benefits whereof we are Partakers in the holy Sacrament, with respect to our Bodies, but to our Souls. For as our Saviour himself argues on another Occasion, *The Flesh profiteth nothing, it is the Spirit that giveth Life.* And therefore what we are to understand by the
World,

the Lord's Supper. . 43

Words, is, that all the real and spiritual Effects of the Body of Christ which was broken, and of his Blood, which was shed upon the Cross, are *verily and indeed* communicated to *the faithful in the Lord's Supper.*

I do not deny, but that Pardon and Grace are indefinitely propos'd in the Gospel to *penitent* Sinners. And that where such Sinners have not the Opportunity of receiving the Holy Sacrament, they shall be entitled to the Benefits of that Declaration which the Prophet has made in the Name of God, that he will *have Mercy, and not sacrifice.* But still it must be acknowledged a mighty Advantage to us, when we appear before God in the Form of Penitents, to have a Promise of Pardon and Grace consign'd to us in Form, and by a visible Deed and Instrument, which is put into our Hands as it were under the Letters Patent, and Broad-Seal of Heaven.

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It is usual in executing those Covenants which Men enter into with one another, to *testify* the Ratification of them, by certain visible Rites and Ceremonies: And we cannot be too thankful to the Goodness of God, and the wise Dispositions of his Grace; who in the Covenant to which he has been pleased to admit sinful Men, has condescended to treat with them in a Method agreeable to the Infirmities of human Nature, and their common Apprehensions of things.

3. A third End for which our Lord instituted the holy Communion, was that it might be a Feast of mutual Love, and Charity among his Disciples. Feasting has been the ordinary Practice of the World, in every Age, and Part of it, towards composing Differences and promoting Benevolence and Friendship among Men. It is proper by a natural and direct Tendency, to produce these Effects. As it inspires a
cheerful

cheerful and more generous Temper of Mind, diverts the Cares and Anxieties of Life, which are apt to render us uneasy to our selves and others, and at once disposes us, even upon a Principle of common Decency, to do all we can to oblige, and to avoid every thing that may give any just Occasion of Offence.

Our blessed Saviour intended by inviting us to feast together at this Table, that we should mutually embrace the Occasion of pursuing these good and beneficent Ends. And yet, if it should be granted, that when he instituted the Holy Communion, he had not these Ends directly in his Intention, nothing cou'd have been contriv'd more proper in its own Nature, to effect them. When we are in the most solemn manner met together to contemplate the exceeding great Love of our Master and only Saviour Jesus Christ in dying for us, and at his own special Appointment,

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to praise the Lord for his Goodness, and declare the Wonders which he hath done, and continues to do for the Children of Men: What can be more just and reasonable, or rather indeed necessary, than that in imitation of those divine Perfections of Goodness and Mercy, which we are at the time adoring, we should piously resolve to do all the Good we may be capable of doing to one another, and to all Men? The Poor on this Occasion particularly, ought to find the Benefit of our charitable Dispositions, in a more liberal manner; both in regard to their Poverty, and as they are *of the Household of Faith*: For being Members of the same mystical Body under Christ the Head of the Church, they have a common Interest in the same Privileges and Graces which are dispens'd in the Communion of it.

And that the Sacrament is a more special and solemn Bond of the mystical

stical Union which is between Christ and his Church, the Apostle, to mention no other Proofs of it, has evidently evinc'd in the Words following (1 Cor. x. 17.) *We being many, are one Bread and one Body; for we are all Partakers of that one Bread.* From whence, among other Exhortations to a sacred *Fellowship* and mutual Edification among Christians, he takes Occasion to advise, that *no Man should seek his own*, that is, not his own exclusively, *but every Man the Wealth, or Advantage, of another.* (ver. 24.)

With respect then to our Christian Brethren in general, it is our indispensable Duty to keep this holy *Feast not with the old Leaven; neither with the Leaven of Malice or Wickedness; but with the unleaven'd Bread of Sincerity and Truth* (1 Cor. v. 7.)

And with respect to our Christian Brethren in Circumstances of Poverty and Distress, according to the Custom
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of the Churches of God in all Ages, and a special Direction (for so all devout Persons will consider it) of our own most excellent Liturgy in the Prayer for the Church militant, where-with the Communion-Office is more immediately open'd, we are to extend our charitable Relief and Contributions as far as a prudent Regard to our own Circumstances, regulated by the Rules of Piety, will allow.

CHAP. III.

The Duties required of us preparative to the Lord's-Supper.

I Here suppose Christians who are preparing to receive the Lord's-Supper, already instructed in the general Doctrines and Duties of Christianity, and to have in particular a competent Knowledge of the Nature of this holy Sacrament, and the Ends of its

its Institution. To qualify us more immediately in which Respects, I have endeavoured under the two foregoing Heads, to give a clear, rational, and distinct Account of it. And if what has been said, may by the Blessing of God be useful towards settling in our Minds right Notions concerning it, they will be of perpetual Advantage to us, and supply us on all Occasions of our preparing to communicate with standing Principles ready to inform and direct us.

Yet I do not know, whether it may be improper still to add something farther, for the Information of those, who readily acknowledge, That supposing God would not admit Sinners to any Terms of Pardon or Reconciliation, but through the Death of his Son, there could not have been a more wise and just Institution than a standing Memorial of his Death: But who cannot so readily apprehend why this Method

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of reconciling Sinners to God was necessary of it self. Towards removing of which Prejudice, there are two Principles advanc'd : Those who look upon vindictive Justice as essential to God, and which necessarily flows from the eternal Holiness and Rectitude of his Nature, assert that he *could* not have pardon'd Sin without a valuable Satisfaction made to him by the Sinner. And that Christ alone appearing in the Sinner's Person, was capable of making that Satisfaction ; who was Man that he might suffer, and God, that his sufferings might be meritorious.

Those on the other hand, who consider vindictive Justice as unworthy of the Goodness and Power of God, and as proceeding always in Men, from Fear, or Want of Power, or a Temper inclin'd to Cruelty : (For where Reasons of Government do not require an exemplary Punishment of Criminals, they

they think no good Prince, whatever Crimes they may be guilty of, can reasonably punish them merely to gratify an *arbitrary* Revenge.) The Persons, I say, who go into this Hypothesis, contend nevertheless, that the Sufferings of Christ were necessary, if not for Reasons of strict Justice, yet for many excellent and invincible Reasons of Wisdom.

For hereby God vindicated the Honour and Authority of his Laws, in the most sensible awakening manner, and at the same time publish'd the highest Act of pardoning Grace to Sinners, and of his just Hatred and Abhorrence to Sin. And indeed, by giving up his only Son to die for us; whether he did it upon Reasons of Justice or Wisdom, he took a Method infinitely more powerful towards imprinting in our Minds, just and dreadful Apprehensions concerning the provoking Nature of Sin, than if he had requir'd us

to have given our own *First-born for our Transgression, the Fruit of our Body, for the Sin of our Soul*; or, had that been practicable, to *have come before him with thousands of Rams, or with ten thousand Rivers of Oyl.*

In a Word, tho' God by the Death of his Son, so evidently declar'd to the World his Willingness to have Mercy on Sinners, yet it is no less evident from the manner of his declaring it, that where the Honour and Authority of his Laws require, his Justice will certainly and severely punish.

It is not my Business here to inquire on which side of this Question the Truth may lie concerning the Justice and Wisdom of God: What I would observe, is, that take what side you please, the Reasons for the Death of Christ, and for our observing the commemorative Sacrifice of it, hold equally strong. For if a wise God would not pardon Sinners, but in considera-
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tion of the Attonement made by the Death of Christ, then his Death was as necessary to their Pardon, as if *strict Justice* had demanded it. And if that general Pardon which Christ procured for Sinners upon the Cross, be in a more immediate manner apply'd to their particular Persons in the holy Sacrament, when they receive it worthily; then certainly it is no less necessary for them on all proper Occasions, to prepare themselves for the worthy Reception of it. And tho' it has been observ'd before, that in the Gospel there is a general Promise of Pardon to Sinners upon their true Repentance; yet besides that no Sinner can be suppos'd a true Penitent, who lives in a known Neglect of any Ordinance of God: Besides this, I say, if we have any right Notion of the Guilt and Danger of Sin, we cannot but think it very desirable to have the Assurances of our Pardon confirm'd to

us in the most authentick, and I may add when speaking of the holy Sacrament, even in a visible manner. These Reasons one would think, were there no other, are sufficient to convince Christians of their Obligation to receive the holy Sacrament; to receive it frequently; and to prepare themselves for it in the best and most pious manner they are capable of. To which End,

Secondly, Self-examination is a Duty expressly injoin'd by the Apostle, and highly reasonable, or rather indeed necessary in it self. I do not here understand this Duty in the largest Sense of the Word, as importing a strict and particular Enquiry into the State of our Souls, and the Nature and Number of our Offences against God. Self-examination in this Sense, is a proper preparative Duty to all other Acts of Piety, and what indeed good Men have constantly charg'd themselves with the Practice

Practice of, and many of them even upon a Principle of natural Religion.

But the Examination of our selves here requir'd by St. *Paul*, has a peculiar Reference to the Occasion upon which he *requires* it. There were several scandalous Disorders, as we have observ'd before, among the *Corinthians*, in their manner of celebrating the Lord's Supper, for which the Apostle severely reproves them, and God by a remarkable Judgment, punish'd many of them, and some of them with Death.

To prevent the like Disorders for the future, and the consequent Punishments, the Apostle exhorts them before they presume to come to the Lord's Supper, to examine themselves; that is, to consider well the Nature and Dignity of that holy Sacrament, and with how great Reverence and Devotion they ought to receive it. This, if we may judge from the par-

ticular Occasion, upon which the Apostle spoke these Words, is what he here primarily intends by *Self-examination*. And certainly the best Rule we have of interpreting any Text of Scripture, is to consider the Relation it stands in to the Context, or how it agrees with the main Scope and Design of the Author.

But tho' this is the proper Sense of Self-examination in the Passage we have cited, the other Acceptation of this Duty ought by no Means to be wholly excluded: Especially when those who are preparing to receive the holy Communion, have time to state Accounts more exactly between God, and their own Consciences; and to inquire in particular what their Sins, and what their Improvements have been under the Means of Grace, and what are at present their evil, or their good Dispositions. It is, I say, incumbent on
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all Persons to make such an Examination, where they have Opportunity for it, in order to prepare themselves more worthily for the holy Communion, the highest, the most sublime, and sacred Rite of Christian Worship, and which is peculiar to it. But then I add withal, that this Duty of Self-examination, consider'd in it self, being of general and standing Obligation, how far and in what particular Instances we should, when we are preparing to receive the holy Communion, reduce it to Act, seems rather matter of Prudence, than of strict Necessity. And where we have not time to examine our selves in a particular Manner, or occasionally come where the holy Sacrament is administred without any previous Notice of the Administration; we ought not for that Reason to think our selves excused from receiving it, provided we come *habitually* prepar'd for it, and with that

Reverence, and those holy Dispositions which are requisite.

The Sum of what I have said is, That tho' it be highly expedient we should set apart some proper Season for the Duty of Self-examination in the largest Sense of the Word, before we receive the holy Sacrament; yet where we have not Time for it, or are, in other respects, doing God Almighty or Religion any good Service, we may as well excuse our selves from the ordinary Duties of Prayer for want of a particular Examination, to which it is an excellent Preparative, as from receiving the holy Sacrament; it being in both Cases rather a discretionary, than an indispensable Duty: And the Precept of *St. Paul* in the direct scope of it, only obliging us to come to the Lord's Table with that awful Regard, and just Sense of Piety, which becomes us on so sacred and solemn an Occasion.

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I am far, by any thing that has been said, from condemning those who make it a part of their Preparation to call themselves to a strict and severe Account for their past Actions, and to inquire what Disposition they are in at present with respect to the Duties of Religion in general.

This is an Office incumbent on all Christians, at all convenient Seasons for the Discharge of it; but there can be no Season more proper for it than on so solemn an Occasion, as that of preparing our selves for the holy Communion. And perhaps were it not for the general Apprehensions Men are under, that the great Duty of Self-examination is more particularly required of them at this Time, they would be in much greater danger of not putting it in practice at any Time.

All I intend, is to caution Men against absenting from the holy Sacrament, because some extraordinary Business,

finess, or perhaps some odd little Accident has happen'd, to interrupt their Devotions, and break in upon those Forms of it which they had piously prescrib'd themselves. But let them not be discourag'd from coming to the Sacrament on this Account. So long as the Duties essential to it are observed, and they are in a holy and religious Temper of Mind; it is much better for them to receive it, tho' they are for the present wanting in some of the Offices of Preparation, which Prudence may at other Times, and in general direct.

The preparative Duties in particular, concerning which our Examination is to proceed, are in the excellent Catechism of our Church reduced to the following Heads, the Order whereof I shall therefore observe.

1. True Repentance for our former Sins.

2. A stedfast purpose of leading a new Life.

3. A lively Faith in God's Mercy through Christ.

4. A thankful Remembrance of Christ's Death, and

5. Charity towards all Men.

1. *Repentance* is one of the Conditions, without which we have no Title to any Promise in Scripture, of Pardon or Grace. But it is more especially necessary at the Time we are preparing to receive that holy Sacrament, whereby the Covenant of Grace is in so eminent a manner sealed and confirm'd to us ; and which our Saviour expressly calls the *New Testament*, or Covenant, in his Blood. We must therefore, if we would now apply to our selves, or plead the Benefit of that Covenant, take all possible Care that our Repentance be sincere and perfect in the several *Parts* of it ; we must *confess* our Sins, whether of
Thought

Thought, Word, or Deed, in the most humble and devout Manner: The Sins in particular of our Inclination, the Sins which more *easily beset* us, on account of natural Temper, of the State of Life, wherein we are plac'd, or any evil and dangerous Habits which we have contracted. And in confessing them, we must have regard to the several aggravating Circumstances where-with they have been committed; whether against the plain Rule of our Duty, the clear Light and Conviction of our own Minds, the Motions of God's Grace, the wise Dispositions of his Providence; or against our repeated Vows and Resolutions of sinning no more in the same kind. If we have any Tenderness of Conscience, such Sins, with the more heinous Aggravations of them, will naturally present themselves to our Minds, though we have not time for a very particular Examination of our selves: But in that Case,

Case, a general Acknowledgment to God of our Offences, or *secret Faults*, provided it be attended with due Humiliation, will, we may comfortably hope, be accepted by him.

And indeed the End of Confession is not to inform an *Omniscient* God, *who understands our thoughts afar off*, and is *acquainted with all our ways*. But the great Design of it, by bringing our Sins to Remembrance, when we consider our selves as appearing more immediately in his Presence, is to fill us with greater Shame, and a more sensible Regret for them.

Shame is a natural Effect of Sin; it seems to have been the first that discover'd it self after the Original Transgression; and it is the Character in Scripture of the most profligate and harden'd Wretches, that they sin without blushing, or any visible Signs of Confusion, *Jer. viii. 12.* But the Shame of a penitent Sinner; of a Sinner;

ner, preparing to communicate at the Lord's Table, and to that end humbling himself before God for his Sins, does not barely consist in the natural Confusion that covers him, and which may be common to him with the most incorrigible Sinners : But he is asham'd of his Offences against a *holy* God, who is of purer Eyes than to behold Iniquity ; and against a *good* God, whose Judgment he has been suffer'd so long, so often to escape ; and whose Goodness ought to have *led him* to a more strict and sincere Repentance, than he has hitherto found himself in proper Disposition to exercise. This Branch of Repentance is very significantly represented by the Prophet *Ezekiel*, when he tells the *Jews*, that *they shall loath themselves in their own sight, for their Iniquities, and for their Abominations.* Ch. xxxvi. 31.

But our Confession of Sin, and the Shame it produces, are still very imper-

perfect Acts of Repentance, if it be not also attended with a hearty Sorrow and *Regret* for the Offences we have been guilty of. Not only such a Regret, as proceeds from the Apprehension we are under of suffering for our Sins, which, though it be of it self and separately consider'd, of no Efficacy towards the Pardon of them; yet is a good Foundation to begin our Repentance upon, and is perhaps the first Ground from which the Conversion of most Sinners takes it Rise. And therefore in the holy Scriptures it is urg'd as a *Motive* to their Conversion. It was from the Terrors of the Wrath to come, that *John the Baptist* preach'd and enforc'd the Doctrine of Repentance to the *Jews*. *Mat. iii. 7, 8.* And our blessed Lord himself takes occasion to inculcate the same Doctrine to them, from the Punishment of the *Galileans*, whose Blood *Pilate* had mingled with their Sacrifice.

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Suppose ye, that these Galileans were Sinners above all the Galileans, because they suffer'd such things : I tell you nay, But except you repent, you shall all likewise perish. But still, if the Repentance of a Sinner rise no higher than merely to make him sorrowful, because, if he continues impenitent, he must suffer ; if it does not beget in him a *godly Sorrow* ; a Sorrow for his having done wickedly, and sinned against God, from a true Principle of Love to him, and Obedience to his Laws ; such a Repentance, I say, will never be acceptable to God. It is only that Part of Repentance which Divines call *Attrition*, and whereof the greatest Sinners, who have no real Design of forsaking their Sins, may with *Ahab*, give many specious external Signs. But that Repentance which distinguishes *true* from pretended Penitents, must arise from a *distinct* and more generous Principle ; from a deep
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the Lord's Supper. 67

Sorrow for our having offended God, and transgress'd his holy Laws ; and wherewith we ought to have been affected, tho' he had threaten'd no Punishment to our Transgression. As a dutiful and loving Child will be more concern'd, that he has incurr'd the Displeasure of his Parents, than at the Effects he may be in Danger of suffering from it.

Holy *David* expresses this Act of Repentance, by a *broken* and *contrite* Heart ; a Heart made sensible to the Impressions of Religion, with respect to all the Motives that are proper to enforce it, especially that tender and most engaging Motive of *Love* ; but which nothing can express the Power of, as operating upon a penitent Heart, after a more full and lively manner than those Words of the Prophet *Jeremiah*, Ch. ii. 19. *Thine own Wickedness shall correct thee, and thy Backslidings shall reprove thee. Know there-*

therefore, and see, that it is an evil thing and bitter, that thou hast forsaken the Lord, thy God.

But Repentance farther implies, what I am to consider in the next Place, under a distinct Head.

2. *A steadfast Purpose of leading a new Life.* A Purpose form'd upon such good Grounds, as will animate us to bring forth Fruits *meet for Repentance*; without which indeed all the other Parts which go to compose our Repentance, will only serve to furnish out a dry, barren, and deceitful Appearance of it. *Godly Sorrow*, saith the Apostle, *worketh Repentance unto Salvation*; that is, a saving Repentance, and which really discovers it self in the Sinner's Reformation and Amendment, is the proper and natural Effect of such a Sorrow. And the Reason hereof is obvious.

Sorrow for Sin gives us *Pain* and Uneasiness, and what is, or has been
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in any sensible degree painful to us, we are very naturally inclin'd to avoid.

Sorrow for Sin supposes also the Hatred of it ; but what is more easy to us, than to resolve against what we hate ? Or rather indeed, what is more difficult to us, than to restrain our selves from forming such a Resolution ?

Again, *lastly*, Sorrow for Sin, That godly Sorrow I am speaking of, supposes the Love of God : But Love is an active and generous Principle ; and where we love sincerely, we cannot satisfy our selves merely by giving no Offence ; a very moderate Passion will serve to this end : But we shall endeavour what we are able to do every thing that may *please* ; nay, there is nothing wherein we shall be capable of taking so great Pleasure our selves, as in such an Endeavour.

The Love of God, the most lovely, the most perfect and excellent of Beings,

ings, will more invincibly produce these Effects. This is what our Saviour himself directly implies in these Words, *John* xiv. 15. *If ye love me, keep my Commandments.* And St. *John* to the same effect tells us, *1 Ep.* v. 3. *This is the Love of God, that we keep his Commandments, and his Commandments are not grievous; or, they are not grievous for this Reason, because we love him.*

3. *A lively Faith in God's Mercy through Christ.* By Faith, is not only intended here a firm Belief, that whatever God has in general promis'd to penitent Sinners through Christ, in whom all his Promises are *Yea and Amen*, shall be effectually made good to them: But we are farther to understand by Faith in this Place, an assur'd Persuasion, that if we come duly prepar'd to the holy Sacrament, the general Promises of God in Scripture, concerning his pardoning Mercy and Grace, shall

shall be immediately apply'd and made good to our own *Persons* in particular. We cannot therefore chuse a more proper Season for the Exercise of our Faith in the Mercy of God, than when we have put our selves in a State of Preparation for receiving the Lord's Supper, the blessed Memorial of that meritorious Sacrifice, whereby God has been pleas'd, and upon no other Terms, *to reconcile the World to himself, not imputing their Trespases to them.*

When, I say, we are going to partake of this divine Ordinance, at the Table of our Lord, where we shall have his Sufferings made the Subject of our Meditations, by a very lively and sensible Representation: This certainly is a most moving Occasion to us of laying firm hold on the gracious Promises of God through Christ, by a particular Application of them to our selves, and of animating our *Faith in his Blood*, to such a degree, as may
give

give it all the Power and *Strength*, whereof it is capable.

4. *A thankful Remembrance of Christ's Death.* And certainly, if an Acknowledgment for any Favour ought to arise in proportion to the Greatness of it, and the Demerits of those on whom it is confer'd, we lye, upon both Accounts, under the strongest Engagements, when we are preparing to receive the Lord's Supper, to raise our Souls to the highest strein of Praise and Adoration.

The Mercies for which we offer up our Praise, are the greatest that were ever dispens'd, and so far as we are able to conceive, could ever have been dispens'd to the Sons of Men. For what can we imagine, even the infinite Goodness of God could have done more in Favour to Mankind, that he has not done to them, in giving up his only begotten Son to suffer Death, a cruel and ignominious Death for them?

How

How can we at any time reflect on such an amazing Instance of the Divine *Philanthropy*, without the most thankful and affectionate Recognition of it; but especially upon an Occasion which leads us to consider, that God hath given his Son our Saviour Jesus Christ, *not only* to die for us, but also to be *our spiritual Food and Sustenance* in the holy Sacrament; by virtue whereof all the Benefits of his Death are particularly confirm'd to us?

The Motives to Gratitude for both these Mercies, are still heighten'd by our Unworthiness of either. Even *while we were Enemies*, while we were in a wretched State of Apostacy and Disorder, *God reconciled us* to himself by the Death of his Son. And since we have by Baptism been admitted to a State of *actual* Reconciliation with him; yet how often, and in what variety of Instances have we offended him, and violated our baptismal Cove-

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nant? How many of us, after we have been admitted to renew that Covenant at the Lord's Table, and to partake frequently of it, have yet relaps'd again into our former sinful State, sometimes into a State *worse than the first*, notwithstanding our repeated Vows and Resolutions of Amendment? All these Considerations tend to shew us, how unworthy we are of the least of God's Mercies; but when he graciously permits, when he invites us to partake of the greatest Favours, which he has committed the Dispensation of to his Church; how can we sufficiently praise his Goodness, or express our thankful Acknowledgments for it?

Praise and Benediction are indeed so essential Parts of our Duty, when we receive this holy Sacrament, that the Office of Communicating has taken a special Denomination from them, and, by the general Voice of Christ's Church, is term'd the *Eucharist*, or an Office
of

of Thanksgiving; which we ought therefore, by way of Preparation, to practise before-hand, in all the proper Instances of it; to the end we may unite with more inflam'd Affections in the publick Forms and Expressions of our Gratitude; and that every one of us may be better qualify'd in particular, to say with the holy Psalmist, *My Heart is ready, O God, my Heart is ready, I will sing, and give Praise.*

5. *Charity towards all Men.* I have already observ'd that the Lord's Supper, in one of the principal Reasons of its Institution, is to be consider'd as a *Feast of Love*; wherein, according to the natural Design of feasting, and the common Practice of feasting upon a Sacrifice; *Gen. xxxi. 54. Ex. xxxii. 56. Ps. cvi. 28.* we openly testify and profess our Love, and all the proper Dispositions arising from it, towards one another. Upon which Account this Sacrament is styl'd, and by a Term peculiar and appropriate

to it, *the Communion*: As if it were the great distinguishing Feast, not only of the Love which ought to be among those who partake together of it, but among the true and faithful Disciples of Christ in general.

It was in order to prepare themselves more worthily in this Respect for the Lord's Supper, that in the Apostolical Age, *Love-Feasts* were instituted before the Celebration of it. And tho' certain Abuses had by degrees crept into that pious Custom, for which it was afterwards no less prudently laid aside; all *discretionary* Rites being in the very Nature of them, for wise Reasons alterable; yet this ancient Practice discovers however what the Sense of the Church was in the earliest Times of it, concerning this necessary Qualification, of our being in Charity with all Men, in the most ample extent of the Word, before we presume to communicate at the Lord's Table.

Table. We should then more especially charge our Consciences with the Apostle's Exhortation ; wherewith I shall conclude this Article. *Let all Bitterness, and Wrath, and Anger, and Clamour, and Evil-speaking, be put away from you, with all Malice. And be ye kind one another, tender hearted, forgiving one another, even as God for Christ's sake hath forgiven you, Eph. iv. 31, 32.*

C H A P. IV.

Some of the most common Prejudices obviated, which are apt to divert Men from preparing to receive the Lord's Supper.

THE several Pretences upon which Men would excuse themselves from receiving the holy Communion, and consequently from practising the Duties preparative to it, have been so

often, and so fully expos'd, that I shall not here enter upon a distinct Enumeration of them. I shall only endeavour to obviate a Prejudice, less commonly taken notice of, tho', as there is reason to fear, too common of it self.

It is pretended then, that the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper does not in general appear to have those holy and beneficial Effects, which are ordinarily attributed to it. And till this Obstacle (so it is by a necessary Inference) to a due Preparation for it be remov'd, Men will be very little influenc'd by all the Arguments we can urge, to recommend or enforce the Duties preparative to it.

For when we advise any Person to employ the Means, which most probably conduce to the End propos'd, it must to a great degree lessen the Force of our Advice, if he entertain an Opinion, that the End it self is of far less Importance and Advantage to him than
we

we have represented it. We must therefore in the particular Instance under Consideration, and if we would effectually persuade Men to qualify themselves for a worthy Participation of the Lord's Supper, make them sensible of their Error, in supposing, that this Sacrament has not really that Power and Efficacy in order to their Sanctification, which we would persuade them to believe.

For the Removal of which Prejudice, it will be proper to shew them, that the Grace of God, by what Means, or in what Measure soever now distributed, does neither operate irresistibly upon our Minds, nor produce a miraculous Change in our Bodies. The Reason of this Distinction, tho' it may appear somewhat novel, will evidently discover it self, from what I shall advance concerning it in the proper Place.

I. The Grace of God does not work

irresistibly upon our Minds; to suppose that it does, without entering here into a formal Proof that it does not, is to render at once all the Precepts, all the Promises, and all the Expostulations of God in the holy Scriptures, irreconcilable to his Wisdom.

When therefore we observe, that Men, after their receiving the holy Sacrament, do not discover those wholesome Fruits, which might have been hop'd from it in their Lives and Conversations, the Cause is not to be ascrib'd to any Defect of that Grace, which the Sacrament is said to confer on worthy Receivers, but from an Indisposition in themselves to receive it; or from an Abuse of their Freedom *afterwards*, which the Spirit of God leaves them to, and whereby they take occasion to turn *his Grace into Wantonness*, or to render it of no effect.

Sometimes Men come to the Lord's Supper, without those pious Dispositions

tions wherewith they ought to qualify themselves for receiving it. And then having no Pretence to the sanctifying *Graces*, which it is suppos'd a Means of conveying to the Souls of Men, we are not to wonder if they do not discover any visible Power of *them* in their future Conduct: To expect this, would be to ascribe an Operation to the holy Sacrament, which cannot from any Principle of Reason, and *ought* not from a Principle of Piety to be admitted; because upon Supposition of it, Men would be much less concern'd after what Manner, or with what Temper of Mind they should prepare to communicate.

At other Times, tho' Men come duly prepar'd to the holy Communion, yet afterwards thinking, that the Season of confining themselves to a Course of more solemn Devotion, of humbling their Souls before God, and forming their good Resolutions, is now over,

they grow by degrees more negligent and remiss in the discharge of their Duty; or perhaps having experienc'd some extraordinary Impulse of Grace, wherewith they found themselves affected in their Meditations upon the holy Sacrament; or at the instant of receiving it, they have presum'd too much on the Strength of that Impulse, without exerting those Endeavours, which were requir'd on their part to concur with it.

If Men will impartially examin their own Consciences, they may observe, that I have here assign'd one or more of the true Reasons why their Progress in the Christian Life, has not been more visible, tho' they have often communicated at the Lord's Table, and perhaps after due Preparation, and in a very devout manner. But.

2. Neither does the Grace of God produce a miraculous Change in our Bodies. I observe this for the Satisfaction of many pious and well-dispos'd
Persons,

Persons, who after they have receiv'd the holy Sacrament in the most holy Frame and with the greatest Ardor of Mind, yet find their former criminal Inclinations, arising either from natural Temper, or some evil Habit, still returning upon them, and frequently solliciting them with the same Force and Importunity, as they had done before.

This extremely perplexes many good Christians, and makes them question, whether after all their Endeavours to that End, they yet come duly prepar'd to the holy Sacrament, or if they did, whether it have really that Influence which it is said to have towards the Conversion of Sinners.

But let no Man be discourag'd by a way of arguing, which supposes that this Sacrament, while it is a Means of conveying inward and spiritual Grace to the Soul, must therefore work Miracles upon the Body. For all evil In-

clinations which proceed from *natural Temper*, will unavoidably on many Occasions be troublesome to us, but especially when the Temper, to which they owe their Origine, is at any time violently excited. But above all, Habits give a certain determinate Course to the Spirits, which they will naturally flow into, whenever the Object which was wont to impell them, is presented to the Mind. Yet as a Person much afflicted with the Gout or Stone; who comes with the most sanctify'd Dispositions to the holy Sacrament, and receives it with the most inflam'd Affections, does not find himself freed from those Distempers, or the Pain they give him; neither is he to expect that his complexional Vice, much less any Vice which he has contracted long and settled Habits of, should be thereby perfectly eradicated.

But what is it then, which habitual Sinners, or those who are more readily

ly prompted by Constitution to *certain* Sins; What is it, I say, that such Persons have to hope from the Benefits of the Lord's Supper, when they come duly prepar'd, and sincerely penitent, to it?

To this I answer, that the Spirit of God does not operate upon Men in the way of a compulsive or mechanical, but of a moral Agent. His Grace supplies us with proper Motives and Considerations, whereby we may be enabled to resist the Attacks of our Enemies, but it does not deliver us from them. It still leaves us to combat with Temptations, which yet we are furnish'd with Means and Assistances sufficient to conquer; but not entirely to subdue, till we have by degrees and contrary Acts of Piety and Holiness, caus'd a Revulsion of those Spirits, from which such Temptations derive their Force; and turn'd them into a different Channel from what they
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were before accustom'd to run in. But to suppose that the holy Sacrament should in the immediate Effects of it, perfectly cure even true Penitents of their constitutional or customary Sins, so that they should not be sensible of any After-returns of Inclination to them; Why, this is to attribute a Power to the Sacrament really as *miraculous*, as if it were to cure us without any medicinal Applications, of our bodily Wounds or Distempers.

I observe this not to discourage the most obstinate Sinners from using the proper Means of Preparation for the Lord's Supper, but to shew that they ought not to think the Benefits of it less considerable, because they do not perceive it attended with those Effects which *ought not* to be expected from it.

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A P P E N -

A P P E N D I X.

I Have principally consider'd in the foregoing Discourse, what is incumbent on us, by way of Preparation, to the Lord's Supper, before we more immediately present our selves in order to receive it. But the Communion-Office of our Church, is in all the Parts of it so admirably design'd, and animated with such an excellent Spirit of Piety, that the best Rule to direct your Devotions and Behaviour at the time of celebrating this sacred Office, is, that you would go along with the Minister in the several Exhortations and Prayers which compose it, with that Attention and Reverence which they are in their own Nature so very proper to excite. And I have here so fair an Occasion of mentioning one Prejudice more, perhaps of all other the most popular, whereby Men
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are diverted from the receiving the holy Sacrament, that I cannot omit to make two or three short Reflections towards the Removal of it.

This Prejudice is grounded on the Words of St. Paul, *1 Cor. xi. 29. He that eateth and drinketh unworthily, eateth and drinketh Damnation to himself.*

It is evident from the main Scope and Design of the Apostle in this Chapter, *that by eating and drinking unworthily*, he intends no more than eating and drinking after a disorderly and *unworthy* manner: Now the Forms previous to the Administration of the Sacrament in our Church, and those of administering it, being on all Accounts so very pious and solemn, no Person who has the least Sense of Religion, or I may add, of what is owing to common Decency, can be suppos'd capable of communicating unworthily with us in the same Respect upon

upon which *St. Paul* here condemns the *Corinthians*.

So great a Reverence indeed is requir'd of us during the whole time of solemnizing this divine Ordinance, that the Enemies of our Church confess the Piety of her Rules, by the very Charge of Superstition which is so unjustly brought against them. As to eating and drinking Damnation, this Version of the Words, whereby Men are so apt to be terrify'd, is acknowledg'd on all Hands, and in effect, by a marginal Note of our Bibles, to be too rigid and severe. If there be any weight in what is objected from this Passage, we may with equal Reason object against our joining in the publick Prayers, or our praying in private. *The Prayer of the wicked, is an Abomination to the Lord*, is at least as strong and formidable an Expression of God's Displeasure against the unworthy Suppliant, as *he that eateth and drink-*
eth

eth Judgment to himself, (for so the Words are to be render'd) is against the unworthy Communicant.

As to what is pretended farther, that our Church it self uses a very terrible Commination to those who presume to come unworthily to the Lord's Supper, and declares, that God is provok'd thereby *to plague them with divers Diseases and sundry kinds of Death*: It is answer'd, that these Words are capable of being interpreted, and probably in a Sense more agreeable to the Design of them, as signifying rather what God in Justice upon such a Provocation may do, than what at present according to the ordinary Course and Methods of his Providence he will do. But as the particular Occasion of provoking those temporal Judgments which were inflicted on the *Corinthians*, is now ceas'd, not only for the Reasons before assign'd, in the Communion of our most excellent

excellent Church, but probably in all
Parts of the Christian World, Christians
in general have less Cause to discourage
themselves from receiving the Lord's
Supper, by an Apprehension of the like
Judgments.

Indeed, those signal extraordinary
Calamities wherewith God visited the
Christians of *Corinth*, were so far from
importing *Damnation* in the strict Sense
of the Word, that they were inflicted
by him in *Mercy*, as salutary Chastise-
ments, and with a particular Design to
prevent their Damnation. For so St.
Paul himself argues upon the Occasion
of them: *When we are thus judged,*
we are chastened of the Lord, that we
should not be condemn'd with the
World, 2 Cor. xi. 32.

After all, no Pretence of Unworthi-
ness can excuse, much less justify the
Neglect of a known Duty; if that
should be granted, there is no Duty
whatever to which Men might not easily
find

find an Argument, were they so dispos'd, to absolve themselves from all Obligation, and at all Times. Why then should a way of arguing, which will not be allowed in any other Case, be thought reasonable in that of the holy Communion, and where it ought least of all to be admitted?

But nothing can more expose this weak, but dangerous Pretence of *Unworthiness*, than the Words of our Church (wherewith I shall conclude) in one of her Exhortations to this holy Sacrament; and to which it is impossible for the Wit of Men, while they absent themselves from it, to frame a satisfactory or tolerable Answer. “ If any Man say, I am a grievous Sinner, and therefore am afraid to come; Wherefore then do ye not repent and amend?

Another Pretence upon which Men would sometimes excuse themselves from receiving the Holy Sacrament, is grounded upon their not being in Charity with their Neighbours. Now it must be acknowledg'd, that a kind and charitable Temper of Mind towards all Persons, is not only a necessary Qualification for receiving the Lord's-Supper, and which arises from the very Nature of it as a Feast of Love, and strict Union of Christians with one another as Members of the same mystical Body under Christ the Head; but such a Temper for these Reasons, is particularly requir'd by our Church in those who come to the Lord's-Table; and is thought so absolutely necessary, that a Power is committed to the Administrator to exclude those from the Holy Communion who are publickly known to want it, or upon such Evidence as he judges sufficient to prove the Want of it in them. The

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Objection

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Objection against receiving the Sacrament, to such Persons as apprehend themselves not to be in Charity with their Neighbours, is the stronger, when besides the personal Malice they bear to them, they have perhaps injur'd them, without making any competent Reparation. It is in this Case particularly requir'd by the Church, That the Curate shall *call the offending Person, and advertise him that in any wise he presume not to come to the Lord's-Table, until he hath recompens'd the Parties to whom he hath done Wrong, or at least declare himself to be in full Purpose so to do as soon as he conveniently may.*

I shall shew the Unreasonableness of what is here pretended to excuse Men from receiving the Lord's-Supper in both these Respects. And,

I. Any Objection against the Practice of a known Duty, can in no Case justify us in the Neglect of that Duty ;
much

much less where all the Force of such an Objection is owing to our own Fault. It is no Crime in a Person sent to execute any Order, if he fall sick or lame by the Way, that he does not execute it at the Time or in the Manner specify'd. But if he designedly by any Disorder or wilful Omission render himself incapable of executing it, there to pretend such Disorder or Omission in Excuse of himself, would only serve to aggravate his Offence. This is the Case of Men who say they are not fit to receive the Lord's-Supper; and therefore think themselves excus'd in neglecting to receive it, because they are not in Charity. But why are they not in Charity? Why do they live in a known Neglect of a Christian Duty, of a Duty, which is both reasonable in it self, and is made a proper and distinguishing Character of their being Christians.

The Pretence is that the Persons they are not in Charity with, have

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done them, or perhaps continue to do them ill Offices. This we grant is an Argument, that the offending and obstinate Party should not receive the Holy Sacrament, or be admitted to it so long as he is known to continue in that Disposition; but it can be no Reason why the Party offended, and who in that respect is merely passive, should refrain from receiving it; except it could be thought that want of Charity, is or ought to be a necessary Consequence of suffering Injuries, which is so far from being true, That, 1. Injuries afford Charity, a proper and noble Occasion of Triumph. 2. That the most illustrious and holy Men have on that Occasion exemplify'd a more generous and extensive Charity, particularly our blessed Lord; and that we are therefore requir'd *to put on Bowels of Mercy, Kindness, Humbleness of Mind, Meekness, Long-suffering; forbearing one another, and forgiving*

giving one another, if any Man have a Quarrel against any: Even as Christ forgave you, so also do ye. 3. That it is made the Character of Charity; that it is not easily *provok'd*, that it *suffereth long*, and is *kind*, that it *beareth all Things*, *endureth all Things*, 1 Cor. xiii. 4, 5, 7.

These it may be said are Precepts calculated for Men of stricter Virtue, or more improv'd Graces; but that in civil Life, it will be found no less prejudicial to our Interests, than opposite to our Inclinations to practise them. Admitting this true, if we profess our selves Christians, we are not to form our Conduct according to the Maxims or Practice of a corrupt World, but the Rules of Christianity. After all, what is here pretended from Experience, is not generally true; there is much greater Peace and Satisfaction of Mind in forgiving an Injury, than in resenting it in the common Me-

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thod taken to shew our Resentment. The *Labour of Love* is much less painful and difficult than that of Revenge. It is also frequently a Man's Interest as well as *Glory*, and an Argument of his Prudence, to *pass over a Transgression*, Prov. xix. 11.

I say it is more frequently so, and therefore to prevent any Mistake concerning the Nature of Christian Charity, I call'd it a Duty reasonable in itself; for it is by no means here intended, that where Men are much injur'd in their Reputation or Estates, they may not take the proper and legal Methods of Redress. No Rules of Charity, however they may oblige in things of less Consequence to our good Name or Interests, wherein we are advis'd *rather to suffer Wrong*, 1 Cor. vi. 7, 8. 1 Pet. iii. 9. can oblige us to ruine our selves in either respect; neither is there the least Necessity, why in preventing the Loss of any Thing of importance to
our

our Interests, and without which we cannot be really so useful in Society, we should of consequence lose our Charity.

It is therefore a most groundless Pretence, if any Men can be so weak as to make it, that they are unqualify'd to receive the Lord's-Supper, because some Legal Process is depending between them and their Neighbours: For why shou'd they upon that account, be in other Respects less kind or beneficent to one another? The Intention of the Law is not to create or foment, but to determine Differences among Men. If they who have Recourse to the Law, in order to redress or repel any Injury, do not always observe a Temper, according to the Rules of Charity, this is only an accidental Abuse of the *Law*, and does by no means arise from the Nature or any necessary Consequence of having Recourse to it.

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2. In other Cases, the greatest Injuries we receive, how much soever they may justify, or be pretended to justify us in withholding certain Favours from them, which might be employ'd to our Disadvantage by our known Enemies, yet can never authorize our Hatred to them, nor even excuse, in Cases of Extremity, our not contributing as we have Opportunity, to their Relief or Support; though we have indeed a discretionary Liberty of conferring our Favours, provided they are in other respects, or in common, qualify'd for them, on our particular Friends.

3. Our being in Charity with all Men, is far from supposing that all Men ought equally or indifferently to share in the Acts of our Charity. Even our Lord himself, as to the special Marks of his Favour and Friendship, made a Distinction between his Disciples; one of them in particular had
that

that glorious Character given him, *The Disciple whom Jesus lov'd.*

4. As all Persons are not equally Objects of our Beneficence, it is lawful for us to proportion the Degrees of it to those who have injur'd us, according to the Nature or Quality of the Injury done us, except in particular Cases where some personal Character or Relation may possibly vary the Rule.

5. 'Tis no Breach of Charity not to forget the Injuries done us. An impracticable Condition of Obedience can never oblige. Now it is impossible for us to avoid some transient Reflections at least, upon the Wrongs done us; especially when fresh and more sensible Occasions of bringing them to our Remembrance, are presented to us, and we have suffer'd by them in our nearest Interests. At such Times the little Cells in the Brain, wherein the Images of them are repositied, naturally open of their own

own accord, and whether we will or no. But so long as we endeavour to stifle our Motions of Hatred or Resentment (and that it is in our Power to do) the involuntary or transient Suggestions of the Memory, shall not be charg'd upon us as a Breach of Charity, or as criminal on any other Account. But,

6. The best Method, (and what has indeed been intimated before) to ingenerate this charitable Disposition towards our Enemies, is to consider on occasion of our preparing to receive the Holy Sacrament, that our Forgiveness of one another is made the Condition of our being forgiven, *Mat. vi. 14, 15. & v. 7.* This is a standing Rule when we pray to God, and incorporated in that admirable Form of Prayer which our Lord has left for the constant Use of his Church. And therefore we may with equal Reason object, that we ought not to pray to God that
he

he would forgive us our Trespases, as that we ought not on occasion of any Trespas done to us, which we cannot easily or willingly forgive, to receive the Sacrament. This Duty indeed seems in the Nature of the Thing, more indispensably requisite towards our communicating at the holy Sacrament, both as our receiving it is one of the most solemn Acts of religious Worship, and a Seal or federal Rite towards ratifying the Pardon of our Sins in a more visible manner. But still the main Reason holds good, that God will not admit the Plea of one Crime in excuse of another.

7. This general Answer may serve to obviate the other, but still more impious Pretence of Men, against receiving the holy Sacrament, because they have not made, or are not in a Disposition to make Satisfaction for the Injuries they have done to other Persons. Now the Duty incumbent on
them

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them to this End, is founded on such clear and common Reasons of Justice, that I do not know any one Principle of Religion more evident or incontestable. It is directly included in that general comprehensive Rule of our Lord, *That we should do unto all Men, as we would they should do unto us.* And a Person, whoever he be, that omits to receive the holy Sacrament, on account of his having injuriously treated or defrauded another, without making any Reparation, or without any true or real Design to that end (and not after the manner of dissemblers with God) may as reasonably urge the same Plea against his exercising any Act of Repentance whatever. For no Man without the greatest Collusion, whether in regard to God or his own Conscience, can propose to repent of his Sins, while he continues in the known habitual Practice of any one Sin. But indeed there is this pecu-

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liar Consideration in the Sin of Injustice: I speak of it here as it consists in defrauding other Persons of their Right, that the offending Party, where he is able to make Satisfaction, and does not make it, cannot be suppos'd to have any real Design of repenting while he lives; because in order to his Repentance, he knows, if he knows any thing of the common Principles of Morality, that he ought to make it. And if he truly design it, he will certainly execute that Design while it is in his Power, and so soon, to prevent any unhappy Effects of his Delay, or any greater Detriment to the Party injur'd, as he possibly can.

This Consideration indeed, peculiarly affects your rich or mighty Oppressors, and which they can never answer when they reflect upon it, to their own Consciences: For tho' Persons in other Circumstances, may possibly flatter themselves with the Hopes that

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they shall be willing if they are able, to compensate for the Wrongs they have done, and upon that View may be tempted to defer making present Satisfaction; yet such Men cannot, for the Reasons I have mention'd (they know what I say to be true) so much as form to themselves any serious or consistent Design of an After-Repentance.

This Pretence therefore against receiving the holy Sacrament, from the Necessity of making Restitution when it is in the Power of the offending Party to make it, when he can have no Reason if ever he design to make it, for not making it immediately, is such a Pretence as will lie with equal Force, against his performing any other Act of religious Worship. So that if the Conscience of any Person, into whose Hands this little Treatise may come, should charge him with the Oppression of his Neighbour, (I understand

derstand the Word according to the utmost Extent of it in the Christian Sense) or with any other Injury done to him, for which he does not fully intend at least to make him some proper Acknowledgement or Satisfaction, he will observe this Argument is design'd to shew, that while he continues in such a State, he is no more qualify'd to pray to God, or offer him any other Sacrifice, than to come to the Table of our Lord. The Expostulation of God with the Jews, is indifferently applicable to all such Persons after what Manner, or with what different Forms of Devotion soever they address themselves to him. *To what purpose is the Multitude of your Sacrifices unto me, saith the Lord?—When you come to appear before me, who hath requir'd this at your Hands, to tread my Courts? Bring no more vain Oblations, Incense is an Abomi-*

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nation to me.——It is Iniquity, even the solemn Meeting.——When you spread forth your Hands, I will hide mine Eyes from you, yea, when you make many Prayers, I will not hear. Your Hands are full of Blood. Wash ye, make ye clean, put away the Evil of your Doings from before mine Eyes; cease to do Evil; learn to do well; seek Judgement, relieve the Oppressed, judge the Fatherless, plead for the Widow, (Isa. i. 11, 12, 13, 15, 16, 17.)

And shall a sinful Practice, for which a Man stands every Moment while he lives self-condemn'd, be thought a tolerable Excuse for his not receiving the holy Sacrament, which may with equal Reason be pleaded against his performing any other proper Act of Devotion whatever?

His Consciousness of such a Guilt, should rather be a Motive to his putting

ting himself in a State of Preparation for the Sacrament, by repairing the Wrongs he has done, and *breaking off his Sin by Repentance*: A Sin which is repeated, and thereby acquires a fresh Aggravation every Moment he lives, till he either actually make Satisfaction to the injur'd Party, or form a sincere and steady Resolution of doing it, so soon as it can be done after the most proper or prudent manner. And in this Disposition indeed, because the Party by whom the Offence came, cannot in all Cases immediately satisfy for it, or because there may be Cases of Difficulty wherein some Deliberation, and perhaps the Advice of others, may be required: for that reason the Church has provided, that such a Person shall notwithstanding be admitted to the holy Communion; and this is so far as her Discipline can either piously or in Prudence dispense. And he who for
want

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want of so just and reasonable a Condition, would still excuse himself in absenting from this holy Sacrament, must certainly know that the true Cause of his not repairing to it, does not proceed from a scrupulous Conscience, but from an obdurate and corrupt Heart.



MEDI-



MEDITATIONS AND PRAYERS

Form'd upon

The principal Parts of the foregoing Discourse.

*A Meditation upon the Nature of the
holy Sacrament.*

HOW condescending is the Goodness of God in transacting with Men, sinful Men, after so sacred, but withal so *sensible* a manner? Is it a small thing, that the King of Heaven should invite us to feast at the Table of his Son? and to feast upon the Sacrifice

crifice of his very Body and Blood ! How is it that our blessed Lord has not only done and suffer'd so much for us Men, and for our Salvation, but that he is still pleas'd to descend again as it were in Person from Heaven, among us ; to *sup*, and make his Abode with us ?

How should my Heart spring with Joy at the Thoughts of my being invited to partake of this heavenly Banquet, to which not only the wise, the mighty, and the noble are call'd, but Persons of all Distinctions ; or rather whereat all Thoughts of civil Distinctions among Men ought to vanish, and no Ideas, no Affections remain with us, but such as are sacred and spiritual ! Oh then that God would inspire me with Sentiments worthy of so great and divine a Favour ! That he would possess my Soul with those inward Delights of his Grace, which
truly

truly devout Persons feel in partaking of this holy Repast. How justly, in comparison of those refined Sensations of Joy, wherewith pious Communicants at the Table of our Lord find themselves transported, may we say, of the profane *Laughter*, in which Men indulge themselves at the ordinary Entertainments of Life, *it is Madness, and of Mirth, what art thou?* The Bread and Wine have indeed a natural Efficacy in them, to strengthen and refresh our Bodies; but that which distinguishes this sacred Feast, that which renders it so proper Matter of Joy and Consolation, is, that it has, by a special Benediction of God, an immediate Tendence towards the strengthening and refreshing of our Souls. With what awful Regard then, with what profound Reverence of Body, as well as inward Veneration of Mind, ought we to celebrate this holy Feast, and make it appear to our selves and others, that

that we really discern in it the Lord's Body ; and put that Distinction upon it, which on so many Accounts, and in so eminent a Manner, is inviolably due to it ?

The blessed Founder of this Feast, was no less a Person than Christ Jesus himself. Our Obedience is unquestionably owing to all the positive Commands of God, by whomsoever he thinks fit to deliver them. But what we have received *of the Lord*, what has been personally deliver'd to us by the *Lord Jesus*, must carry a more direct and powerful Authority along with it. And yet the Circumstances wherewith this Institution was accompany'd, have a farther Tendency still to enforce it. Our Saviour left it us in Charge, at a time when he was going to suffer Death ; when he chose to lay down his Life for our sakes ; and when the cruel and ungrateful Usage he met with, if his Love had not been stronger

stronger than Death, and all the Provocations under which an innocent Person can be suppos'd to die, might, were we to judge from human Inclination, have stop'd or diverted the Current of it.

We cannot certainly take too great Care, that so divine an Ordinance, instituted for the perpetual Benefit and Edification of Christ's Church, should be regularly administer'd, and by Persons duly authoriz'd in it; that no profane or unhallow'd Hands should offer to pollute this Sacrifice; No Mock-Formality of celebrating it, should impose upon weak and ignorant, or so far as we are capable of reclaiming them, upon obstinate People. Those only who are call'd of God to that End, ought to offer this holy Incense. But if any, upon the old Pretence of *Corah* and his Accomplices, That all the Congregation of the Lord are holy, and that every Man, whom the

State thinks fit to commission, has a Right to administer the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper, will therefore assume the Administration of it; It becomes us to be very cautious, lest by joining in their sacrilegious Invasions, we should share the Guilt of them. Let us rather, as God by *Moses* directs the *Jews* in the like Case. *Depart from the Tents of these wicked Men, and touch nothing of theirs, lest we be consumed in all their Sins.*

May that holy Spirit, by whom the whole Body of the Church is govern'd and sanctify'd, continue it evermore upon a true Establishment, with respect to the proper Ministers, and ministerial Rights of it. May he dispense his Grace to all Bishops and Curates, that they may rightly and duly administer the holy Sacraments: And grant, that the Church being always preserv'd from false Apostles, may
be

be order'd and guided by faithful and true Pastors.

How wisely has our blessed Lord appointed Bread and Wine the two Parts, whereof this divine Supper is to be compos'd; Bread for the Simplicity of it the most agreeable Food, at so sacred an Entertainment, and for the distinguishing Quality of it, most proper to strengthen Man's Heart; and therefore a fit Emblem of that Strength and Virtue which is convey'd in the Sacrament, towards maintaining the Life of the Soul, and augmenting its Growth in inward and spiritual Grace: As Wine, the Blood of the Grape, most naturally represents that precious Blood which was shed by our Saviour upon the Cross; and from a peculiar Virtue ascrib'd to it, towards making Men of *a chearful Countenance*, most significantly denotes those heavenly Joys and Consolations which poor humbled

Sinners taste, when the Cup of Blessing is administred to them.

For ever then, for ever, till Christ shall appear at his second Coming in Glory to judge the World, let us observe this blessed Memorial of the last and finishing Act of his Humiliation for us. Let it be an Ordinance to his Church throughout all Generations ; and grant me thy Grace, O God, in particular, that on all proper Occasions, I may constantly repair to it ; and after a manner suitable in all Respects, to the Sacredness and Dignity of it.

*A Meditation upon the Ends for which
the Lord's Supper was instituted.*

A Wake all the Powers of my Soul,
to consider the Reasons more
particularly, upon which our blessed
Redeemer was pleas'd to leave this
sacred

sacred Charge, concerning his last Supper, to the Church. His Authority alone was sufficient to enforce whatever he might have thought fit to command, though he had render'd no explicit Reason for it, or we were incapable of rendring any our selves. But in appointing the holy Sacrament of his Body and Blood, he has given us a *Statute*, so far (like many of those, wherewith the Jewish Religion seems to have been charg'd) from being the mere effect of an arbitrary Will, that it appears highly congruous in the Nature of the Thing. And therefore, notwithstanding we are so little capable by searching to find out God ; yet what may be known concerning the Wisdom of his Conduct in this respect, having on many Accounts so reasonable a Foundation, we may come more boldly to the Throne of Grace, in our divine Conversations with him, and severally prefer that pious Ejaculation of holy

Job. Surely I would speak to the Almighty ; and I desire to reason with God.

And indeed when the Son of God had condescended, out of his infinite Love and Compassion to Mankind, to offer himself a Sacrifice for Sin, and upon that Design to take upon him the Person of a Sinner ; when his Father had prepar'd a Body for him, and he had said, Lo ! I come to do thy Will, O God ; what could have been more reasonable, after he had done his Father's Will, than to institute a standing Memorial of so extraordinary an Action, and in all the Circumstances of it so deservedly memorable, above any that ever happen'd in the World since the Foundation of it ? For alas ! the Imperfection of our Nature is such, that the Mind does not long retain the Notices that are committed to it ; which yet are never so strong and lively, as when they are awaken'd by sensible

sible Representations. Time wears out in some measure the Impressions, which the most remarkable Events of Life have made upon us ; our absent and our dying Friends, whom we love with the greatest Ardour, are desir'd, to the end we may be more sensibly affected with the Remembrance of them, to oblige us with one Token or other of their Love, which we may keep continually by us. What Thanks then, blessed Jesus, do we owe to the Love where-with thou hast loved us ? That we are favour'd by thy own special Appointment, with so rich and sacred Pledges of it ; such as *our Eyes may see, and our Hands may handle.* What is Man, O Lord, that thou shouldst thus condescend to treat with him, to shew him thy Body broken, and thy Blood shed afresh, and to represent over again, in so significant a manner, the wondrous Scene of thy Sufferings, and Labours of thy Love ? What is Man, O Lord,

that thou shouldst thus visit him, or the Son of Man that thou so regardest him? Praise the Lord, O my Soul, and forget not all his Benefits; forget not those Benefits especially, which he has prescrib'd so excellent a Method to preserve the Remembrance of; and in all Respects so wisely suited to the present State and Condition of human Nature.

But thy Love, blessed Lord, did not terminate in commanding us to observe this holy Ordinance in Remembrance of thee. It is also an authentick *Seal*, to confirm all the Benefits of that precious Death to us, whereof it is a commemorative Sign. Hereby thy Body becomes Meat indeed, and thy Blood Drink indeed; not that natural Body which was nail'd to the Cross, and is now set down at the right Hand of God, which cannot be in two Places at once, or be two distinct Bodies in one Place; but that sacramental Body, whereby

whereby all the blessed Effects of thy Death and Passion for us, are verily and indeed communicated to the worthy Receiver. So that in this holy Sacrament there is a virtual Presence of the blessed Body and Blood of my Redeemer, and a real Presence as to all the spiritual Benefits and Intents of them. What a glorious Privilege is this? how can we set a just and sufficient Value upon it? That God has not only admitted us, through the Death of his Son, to Terms of Pardon and Grace, but to a sacred Ordinance, wherein the new Covenant in his Blood is, in a visible manner, ratify'd to us. Wherein the Pledges of our Pardon are even put into our Hands, and we sensibly taste and see how good and gracious the Lord is. In a word, in this sacred Transaction between God and our Souls, the Benefits of that general Redemption, which Christ paid the Price of upon the Cross, are here effectually apply'd

ply'd and made good to our particular Persons. " Praise the Lord then, O
" my Soul, and all that is within me,
" praise his holy Name; who cover-
" eth all thy Sin, and healeth all thy
" Infirmities; who saveth thy Life
" from Destruction, and crowneth thee
" with Loving-kindness and tender
" Mercies; who satisfyeth thy Mouth
" with good Things.

But I am still able, O my God, to discover a farther Design worthy of thy Wisdom and Goodness in this holy Institution. The Benefits convey'd in it to our particular Persons are great, and far above what we could either have desir'd or deserv'd. But our Lord propos'd that it should also be a Means of a publick and general Good to his Disciples; a Means of disposing them to all mutual Offices of Love, Humanity and Respect, and of preserving among them in the strictest manner, the Unity of the Spirit in the Bond of Peace.

Peace. And how, O Lord, could these beneficent Ends, and so agreeable to the Spirit of thy holy Religion, have been more effectually obtain'd, than by a solemn Rite, wherein thy great Love to Mankind is so wonderfully exemplify'd; and at a holy Feast, where by eating of one Bread, we mutually testify and profess the common Sympathy and Affection which ought to be maintain'd among us, as one Body? God Almighty give me his Grace, that I may faithfully charge my Conscience with all the Duties requir'd of me, on account of this sacred Relation; that I may make my self appear to be his Disciple indeed, by all the proper Expressions of my Love and Charity to all Men, in doing whatever good Offices I may be capable of to them, whether in order to promote their spiritual or their temporal Advantage. I will, by the Blessing of God, on this solemn Occasion, extend my

Liberality to the poor Members of Christ, as far as the Reasons of Piety and Prudence will possibly admit : both as the Nature, I may add, the very Name of the Communion, implies an Obligation upon me to offer such a Sacrifice ; and as our Lord has so expressly declar'd, that he will take what is done in this kind to my indigent Brethren, as done to himself.

*A Meditation on the Sacrifice of Christ
upon the Cross.*

THE Righteous Lord loveth
Righteousness, Justice and Judgment are the Habitation of his Throne. Yet as the Heaven is high above the Earth, so great is his Mercy towards them that fear him, so far has he removed their Transgressions from them. But what, O my Soul ! can be more worthy of thy Search or Enquiry, than by
what

what Methods of his Wisdom, the Mercy and Truth of God met in so perfect Harmony together, that his Righteousness and Peace kissed each other. O the Depth of the Riches, both of the Wisdom and Goodness of God! For who could have known the Mind of the Lord, or who have been his Counsellor, in the wonderful Contrivance he form'd of redeeming lost Mankind, by giving up his only begotten Son to die for them? An offended God ought to have some valuable Reparation made to him, by the Punishment of the Offender. If Reasons of strict Justice should not require this, yet invincible Reasons of Wisdom render it absolutely necessary. For if Sinners could once flatter themselves with the Hopes of Impunity, how soon would the Authority of all Laws, and of all Government, become precarious? How much more would Men encourage themselves
in

in Wickedness, and expostulate with one another, in the Language where-with *Job* introduces the Libertine? *What is the Almighty, that we should serve him?* To prevent that Contempt of his Authority, which would have been a general Consequence of God's pardoning Sin, without punishing the Sinner, He found out a way at once to punish him in the most terrible and severe, and to pardon him in the most gracious manner. He gave his only begotten Son to make that Atonement for him, which he could never have made in his own Person. By thy Stripes, blessed Jesus, are we healed, and render'd capable by thy Death of saving our Souls alive. How wonderful, O God, art thou in thy Doings towards the Children of Men? In this surprizing Work of reconciling the World unto thy self, not imputing their Trespases to them; Thou hast by the same Act discover'd the highest
In-

the Lord's Supper. III

stances of thy pardoning Mercy, and of thy avenging Justice. What are all the precarious Schemes or Conjectures of natural Religion, concerning the pardoning Mercy of God to penitent Sinners? What are all of them, I say, to this one reveal'd and *assur'd* Truth, that God *will*, through the Merits of Christ, pardon the Sinner upon his Repentance, and remember his Sins and Iniquities no more? What little Satisfaction is there in putting uncertain Questions; in saying it *may* be so, or, *who can tell if God will turn and repent, and turn away from his fierce Anger, that we perish not*, in comparison of what the Scriptures expressly declare, that Jesus Christ came into the World to save Sinners, and to put away Sin by the Sacrifice of himself? Let Unbelievers, if they *can*, discover any Grounds like these, whereon to found their Hopes of the Pardon of Sin, or the Salvation of Sinners? But
desire

desire thou not, O my Soul, to enter into their Secret; thou hast here, blessed be God, a more sure Word of Prophecy to rely on; acquiesce entirely in this faithful Saying, and accept it with all Thankfulness to God.

*A Prayer for a better understanding,
and more worthy Reception of the
Lord's Supper.*

O Most holy and merciful God, the the Fountain of Light and Grace; open, I beseech thee, mine Eyes, that I may see the wondrous Things of that divine Law, which has appointed a standing Memorial to be observ'd of the Death of thy only Son, our Saviour Jesus Christ. Give me a right Understanding in all Things, with respect both to the Nature and Ends of this holy Commandment; that I may not offer unto thee the Sacrifice of Fools,
but

but a reasonable Service; that my Mind may be enrich'd with a Stock of just and standing Principles, from which on all Occasions of my preparing to partake of so divine an Ordinance, I may readily draw proper Supplies, whereby I may at all times, and more especially at present, be enabled distinctly to comprehend thy manifold Wisdom and Goodness, in all the Parts, and in all the Reasons of it.

And grant, O heavenly Father, that the Knowledge wherewith I here pray thee to enlighten my Mind, may not consist in empty and fruitless Speculations, but that the more I know, the more I may love; and the more visibly discover the Effects of my Love by a ready and chearful Obedience to thy Commands in general, and especially by a faithful Discharge of all the Duties preparative to this holy Ordinance. In respect to it therefore, I now more peculiarly offer up my Prayers, that I
may

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may both perceive and know what things I ought to do, and also may have Grace and Strength faithfully to perform the same.

Assist me, O Lord, in particular by thy holy Spirit, that I may strictly prove and *examin* my Thoughts, and look well if there be any way of Wickedness in them. That upon the Discovery of my Transgressions, I may sincerely repent of them, with full Purpose and Resolution of Amendment. That my *Faith* in God's Mercy, through Christ, may be lively, and fortify'd by a particular Application of his Merits to my self. That my Remembrance of his Death, may be attended with a due Sense of Gratitude, and a most thankful Acknowledgment for all the blessed Effects of it. And lastly, that my Charity in all the Branches of it, may be extended to all Men, and in the highest measure whereof I may be capable. These holy Dispositions,

positions, O Lord, and if there be any other which may be necessary to create in me a clean Heart, and to renew a right Spirit within me, to the end I may come more worthily prepar'd to the Lord's Table, I humbly beg for the Merits and through the Mediation of the same thy Son, my ever blessed Saviour and Redeemer. *Amen.*

*A Prayer in order to a more strict
and impartial Self-examination.*

A Almighty God unto whom all Hearts are open, all Desires known, and from whom no Secrets are hid, cleanse the Thoughts of my Heart by the Inspiration of thy holy Spirit, that I may distinctly perceive wherein and with what Circumstances of Aggravation, I have at any time offended against thee. Let me not presume, O Lord, to eat of the Bread of Life, or receive
the

the Cup of Salvation, till I have search-
ed into the inmost Recesses of my
Mind, and learn'd in what Disposition
all things are, relating to my spiritual
State; till I have enquired more parti-
cularly into the Nature of my habitual
and more crying Sins, and found out
their original Source, with the secret
Springs that feed them. Teach me, O
holy and righteous God, to judge my
self for these and all other my Offences
against thee, in such a manner, that I
may not be judged, “ but may so search
“ and examine my own Conscience,
“ and that not lightly and after the
“ manner of Dissemblers with God,
“ but so that I may come holy and
“ clean to such a heavenly Feast in
“ the Marriage-Garment requir'd by
“ God in the holy Scripture, and be
“ received as a worthy Partaker of
“ that holy Table. *Amen.*

An Act of Self-examination.

I Will shake off the flattering Disguise wherein my Sins made their first Approach, or have hitherto impos'd upon me, and consider them severally in their proper Colours, and true Deformity. I will say unto God, how many are mine Iniquities and Sins? make me to know my Transgression and my Sin. I will enquire how often and in what Instances I have done wickedly and sinn'd against God; through Ignorance, through Neglect, through Inadvertency: But above all, wherein I have offended of malicious Wickedness, and how far such Offences have grown up into settled and permanent Habits. [*Here mention the Sins wherewith your Conscience charges you on any of the foregoing Accounts, desiring in general, that God would cleanse you from*
your

your secret Faults : And then expostulate with your self after the following manner, in order to shew whether you be sincerely penitent for them.] I have communed with mine own Heart, and with my Spirit made diligent Search, that I might find out all my Iniquities whereby I have sinned, and whereby I have transgressed against the Lord. I have consider'd the Nature, and so far as I have been able to discover it, the Number of my Sins. And they appear in both respects like a sore Burthen, too heavy for me to bear. But am I really weary of my Captivity, or do I sincerely resolve to use the proper Means of delivering my self from it ? To what end did I examine how numerous my Sins have been, if I make no Inquiry upon these Articles ? I will therefore resolve to prove my own Work, and learn, if I can, by exercising the *particular* Acts and Duties of Repentance, what good Disposition I
am

am in towards it, and whether my Heart be in Truth right with God.

An Act of Self-examination, in the more restrain'd Sense of the Apostle St. Paul; and which may be us'd when we occasionally come where the holy Sacrament is administer'd, or we have less Time to prepare for it.

I Am invited to feast at the Supper of my Lord; but the short Notice I have receiv'd, or the little Time I can set apart, by reason of many necessary Avocations, and other important Duties, in order to render my self more worthy to appear at his holy Table, seems to forbid my Access to it; lest I should incur that severe Reproach upon him who appear'd at the Marriage Feast without a Wedding Garment; *Friend, how camest thou hither?*

hither? What shall I do, whilst I am thus divided between the Sentiments of Duty and Reverence? Of *Duty* to a positive Command of my blessed Saviour, and of *Reverence* to the Sacredness of the Thing commanded; and which makes me so apprehensive of the Guilt I shall contract in profaning it. What shall I do in this Perplexity? Shall I refuse an Obedience which is certainly due, upon a Scruple, which may have no certain Foundation; and which I have the greater Reason to believe has none, from the Desire wherewith I find my self possess'd, of being freed from it? Since I cannot therefore prepare my self to partake of this holy Ordinance, by a particular Examination or Repentance, I will beg that God in his great Goodness would accept an Acknowledgment of my Sins, and my Humiliation for them in general. I will go to my Father, and will say unto him, Father, I have sinned
against

against Heaven and before thee, and am no more worthy to be call'd thy Son : I will trust in his paternal Love and Mercy, for the Acceptance of an *habitual* Preparation, where I am not capable of offering him the Sacrifice of an actual Preparation, in all the Parts of it. I will more especially take Care (for that I have no Pretence of Excuse from) to examine my self according to the primary Intention of the Apostle, whether I am really prepar'd to come to this holy Sacrament, with those pious Dispositions, that Attention of Mind, that external Reverence and Composure of Body, which are due to the Dignity and Sacredness of so divine and an Institution.

*An Act of Repentance as it imports
the Confession of Sin.*

I Have sinned, what shall I do unto thee, O thou Preserver of Men ? **I**
G will

will present my Offences before thee, with all the Guilt, with all the Motives and inflaming Circumstances of them. I will confess my Transgressions unto the Lord, and not hide the *Iniquity* of my Sin. My Thoughts, my Words, and my Actions, all concur in testifying against me, and declare that I have sinned against the Lord; that I have sinned and done perversly; that I have dealt very corruptly against thee. They even reproach me with the impure Mixtures proceeding from private Interest or Vanity, wherewith my best Actions have been dash'd and polluted. The Sin in particular of my Inclination, the Sin which more easily and habitually besets me, has taken such hold on me, that I am not able to look up. But the manner of my committing all these Offences, has been still more provoking thy Wrath and Indignation: They have been committed against the plain Rule of my Duty,

the

the strong Remonstrances of my own Reason and Conscience; the Motions of thy Grace, the wise Dispositions of thy Providence, and after many repeated Vows and Resolutions of Amendment. But how can I understand all my Errors? cleanse thou me, O God, from my secret Faults; and in thy infinite Mercy pardon me all my known and more crying Sins, which I have here call'd to Remembrance. Thus before I presume to approach the holy Altar, will I pray unto the Lord God, and make my Confession.

II. *Shame.*

What a Confusion, O God, spreads its self over my Soul, when I reflect upon my Iniquities, and upon my Abominations? How do I loath my self in my own sight for them? Yet I will not cover my Transgressions as *Adam*, nor hide my Iniquities in my Bosom. I will give Glory to God, and make

Confession, and take Shame to my self. I will humble my self before him and acknowledge that I have no Fruit in those things, whereof I am now ashamed. It is the Character of the vilest of Sinners, that when they have committed Abomination, they are not at all ashamed, neither do they blush. But to me belongeth Confusion of Face, and the very Shew of my Countenance, for having offended so good and holy a God, shall bear Witness against me. I will therefore *greatly* humble my self before God.

III. *Sorrow.*

But how imperfect still are the Acts of Humiliation and Repentance, if they be not attended with a hearty Sorrow and Regret on Occasion of all the Offences, for which my own Heart, or God, who is greater than my Heart, and knoweth all things, may justly condemn me. Not that Sorrow which
barely

barely proceeds from a Fear of suffering, and is common to the most wicked Men under the Apprehensions of Death, or any violent Circumstances of Adversity or Danger; but that *godly* Sorrow which worketh Repentance unto Salvation not to be repented of; which arises from an active and generous Principle of filial Love to God, not so much under the Notion of an avenging Judge, as of a *faithful Creator* and merciful Father; and as of all other Beings infinitely the most excellent and lovely in all Respects. O then that God would give me a Heart to know him, and Jesus Christ, whom he has sent; that he would cause my Eyes to flow with Tears of true Contrition for my having offended, in such variety of Instances, so tender a Father, and so gracious a Redeemer. How can I, but with the utmost Detestation, look upon those Sins, to deliver me from which my blessed Lord

was pleas'd to take upon him the Person of a Sinner and to die for me. Wondrous Love! Exuberant Goodness! The lowest Return of Love I can make to my only Saviour, is heartily to lament for the Provocations wherewith I have provoked him, and to offer him the Sacrifice of a broken and a contrite Heart. 'O then that God would make me know my Transgression and my Sin, in the most awakening and sensible manner: That he would make me know and see, that it is an evil thing and a bitter, that I have forsaken the Lord my God.

*A Prayer for a firm Resolution of
new Obedience.*

O Holy Father, I have confessed my Wickedness, and am asham'd, and sorry for my Sin. But these are still imperfect and unfinish'd Acts of Repentance,

pentance, and will not entitle me to the Benefits of that holy Sacrament, which I am preparing to receive, if thou do not assist me with thy holy Spirit to bring forth Fruits meet for Repentance. Excite in me, O God, to this End, firm and holy Resolutions of a new and uniform Obedience; and so confirm them by the Power of thy Grace, that my future Conduct may more and more discover the holy Effects of it. O then that I may return *now* from my evil Way, and make my Ways and my Doings good; that I may return to my God, and my Lord, with all my Heart, with all my Soul, and with all my Strength. If I have done Iniquity, I will resolve to do so no more. I will cast away all my Transgressions, and endeavour by the Grace of God, to make me a new Heart, and a new Spirit. I will wash my Hands in Innocency, and so will I compass thine Altar, O Lord. *Amen.*

A Prayer for a lively Faith in God's Mercy.

ALmighty and most merciful God, of whose Gift alone a true and lively Faith cometh, help thou my Unbelief, and inspire me with thy Grace, that I may not only yield in general a firm Assent to all the Truths reveal'd in the holy Scriptures, and all the Promises therein made to thy faithful Servants, but that I may be thoroughly perswaded of my particular Interest in them, and firmly believe, that thou wilt cause them to be made good to me immediately and in Person, by means of that holy Sacrament, whereof I am now preparing to communicate. Grant, O Lord, that the lively and sensible Representation, which is made therein of the Death of thy Son, may animate my Faith in his Blood, to a full Assurance

urance of my being justify'd by it; to such a degree, that I may distinctly apprehend my self in the Number of them, that believe to the saving of the Soul. Thou hast declar'd O blessed Jesu, that he who eateth thy Flesh, and drinketh thy Blood, hath eternal Life; mercifully grant that on this solemn Occasion of my repairing to partake of the Sacrament of thy Body and Blood, my Faith may not fail me; but that I may firmly lay hold on this general Promise of my blessed Redeemer, and personally apply it. In whom therefore, though I now see him not, yet believing, I may rejoice with Joy unspeakable. *Amen.*

A Prayer that we may more thankfully remember the Death of Christ.

Almighty and most merciful Father, I desire to render thee my
G 5 most

most humble and hearty Thanks, for all thy Goodness and Loving-kindness to me and to all Men : I bless thee for my Creation, Preservation, and all the Blessings of this Life; but above all, for thine inestimable Love in the Redemption of the World, by my Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. Inspire me, O God, with Sentiments of Gratitude suitable to so great a Mercy, and the Demerits of those, to whom the Benefits of it are design'd to extend. What, O God! could infinite Goodness have done more in Love to Mankind, that thou hast not, by this one Act of thy gracious Favour, done to them? O that I could with the Tongue of Men and Angels give Glory to God, and declare the Wonders which he hath done for the Children of Men; that I could worthily praise him, according to his excellent Greatness, and tell forth his Works with Gladness! But what shall I render to the Lord for all the

the Lord's Supper. 131

Benefits that he hath done unto me ?
I will receive the Cup of Salvation,
and call upon his Name ; I will pay my
Vows in the Presence of all his People
in the Courts of the Lord's House. I
will pray for his Grace, that I may
honour him not only with the Fruit
of my Lips, but of my whole Life,
that I may abound in many Thankf-
givings to him, in the Course of a fu-
ture and more perfect Obedience ; that
I may give self up to his Service, and
walk before him in Holiness and Righ-
teousness all my Days, through Jesus
Christ my Lord ; to whom, with the
Father, and the Holy Ghost, be all
Honour and Glory World without end.

Amen.

*A Prayer for Charity towards all
Men, and in all Respects.*

O Lord! who hast taught us that all our Doings without Charity are nothing worth; send thy Holy Ghost, and pour into my Heart that most excellent Gift of Charity, the very Bond of Peace and of all Perfection. In a more particular manner I now pray for this Grace, as it respects the Love of my Neighbour, and that I may be enabled to discharge the Duties of it to him, in every Instance of them. How unworthy should I be to appear at the Table of my Lord, there to commemorate his exceeding great Love, in tasting Death for me, and for every Man, while I am wanting in the common and ordinary Offices of Love to any Man? To the end therefore, O God! that my Charity may be more
per-

perfect in it's Kind, and more enlarg'd as to the Measure of it; put away from me all Bitterness and Wrath, and Anger, and Clamour, and Evil-speaking, with all Malice. Grant, that as I have Opportunity, and according to my Ability, I may do good unto all Men, and especially to them who are of the Household of Faith; contributing as much, as lieth in me, my Endeavour and Assistance towards promoting their spiritual and their temporal Advantage; extending on both Accounts my charitable Relief on this solemn and proper Occasion, in a more liberal manner to the poor Members of Christ under Circumstances of Want, or any other Distress. Give me thy Grace, O God! that I may love and do good even to those that hate me; that I may not render them Evil for Evil, but contrariwise Blessing; that I may heartily desire a mutual Reconciliation, and be ready to forgive them, as I hope,
through

through the Merits of Christ, and for his sake, to be forgiven. Extend, O Jesu! my Charity in general, to Jews, Turks, Infidels and Hereticks. Have Mercy upon them all, and take from them all Ignorance, Hardness of Heart, and Contempt of thy Word and *Sacraments*; and so fetch them home, blessed Lord, to thy Flock, that they may be fav'd among the Remnant of the true Israelites, and be made one Fold, under one Shepherd, Jesus Christ our Lord. *Amen.*

A Prayer on Occasion of our preparing for the holy Communion before we go to Church.

ALmighty God, our heavenly Father, who hast invited me this Day to the Table of thy Son, where will be administred the most comfortable Sacrament of his Body and Blood,

to

to be received in Remembrance of his meritorious Cross and Passion, whereby alone we obtain Remission of Sins, and are made Partakers of the Kingdom of Heaven: I give thee most humble and hearty Thanks, for that thou hast given thy Son, my Saviour Jesus Christ, not only to die for me, but also to be my spiritual Food and Sustenance in this holy Sacrament, which being so divine and comfortable a Thing to them, who receive it worthily, and so dangerous to them who presume to receive it unworthily; grant me, I most humbly beseech thee, thy Grace, that I may truly consider the Dignity of that holy Mystery, and to so blessed an Effect, that I may come holy and clean to the heavenly Feast, in the Marriage Garment requir'd in the holy Scripture, and be receiv'd as a worthy Partaker of it. Grant this, O Lord! for the Sake, and through the Mediation of thy Son Jesus Christ, my blessed Lord and Saviour. *Amen.* *Eja-*

*Ejaculations proper to be used after
this Prayer.*

O How amiable are thy Dwellings,
thou Lord of Hosts? My Soul
hath a desire and longing to enter the
Courts of the Lord; my Heart and
my Flesh rejoice in the living God.

Ofend out thy Light and thy Truth,
that I may go unto the Altar of God,
even unto the God of my Joy and
Gladness. And with my Heart will I
give Thanks to thee, O God my
God.

I will wash my Hands in Innocency,
and so will I compass thine Altar, O
Lord!

When we come into the Church.

LET the Words of my Mouth, and
the Meditations of my Heart, be
ever

the Lord's Supper. 137

ever acceptable to thee; O God, my Creator and my Redeemer.

Make me a clean Heart, O God! and renew a right Spirit within me, that my Prayers may ascend up to thee as the Incense; and that I may offer with them an acceptable Sacrifice of Praise and Thanksgiving; and more especially in the commemorative Office of the Death and Passion of my blessed Saviour, thy Son, Jesus Christ. *Amen.*

Before the Offertory Sentences.

THine, O Lord, is the Greatness, the Power, and the Glory.—

All that is in Heaven, and in Earth, is thine; both Riches and Honour come of thee. But who am I, and what is this People, that we should be able to offer any thing to thee? For all things come of thee, and of thine own do we now give thee.

Thou hast created all Things, and
by

by thee they are, and were created.

Open thou my Heart, O God, unto thee; and my Hands unto the poor Brethren; or to whomsoever the Benefit of our Oblations is design'd to extend.

When we offer.

I Know, my God, that thou tryest the Heart, and hast Pleasure in Uprightness; as for me, in the Uprightness of mine Heart I willingly offer this small Sacrifice, and most humbly beg thy gracious Acceptance of it.

When the Minister is preparing to consecrate.

Like as the Hart panteth after the Water Brooks, so longeth my Soul after thee, O God!

My Soul is a-thirst for God, yea even for the living God.

I have waited for thy Salvation, O Lord! O be merciful unto me a Sinner, and

and satisfy me with thy Likeness.

Turn thee, O Lord, and deliver my Soul; O save me for thy Mercy's sake.

I stretch forth my Hands unto thee; my Soul gaspeth unto thee, as a thirsty Land.

Draw nigh unto my Soul, and save it: Turn thee unto me, and have Mercy upon me.

Turn thee, O Lord, and deliver my Soul; O save me for thy Mercy's sake.

Enter not into Judgment with thy Servant, for in thy Sight shall no Man living be justify'd.

If thou, Lord, shouldest be extreme to mark what is done amiss, who may abide it? but with thee there is Mercy, that thou shouldst be feared, and with thee there is plenteous Redemption.

O remember not the Sins and Offences of my Youth, but according to thy Mercy think upon me for thy Goodness.

Deliver me, O Lord, from mine Enemies, for I flee unto thee to hide me.

7

H

Quicken

140 *A Preparative to*

Quicken me, O Lord, for thy Name's sake, and for thy Righteousness sake, bring my Soul out of Trouble.

Teach me to do the Thing that pleaseth thee, for thou art my God: Let thy loving Spirit lead me forth in the Land of Righteousness.

Glory be to the Father and to the Son, and to the Holy Ghost.

As it was in the Beginning, is now and ever shall be, World without End. Amen.

A Prayer and Ejaculations which may be used as the Time serves, after Consecration.

O Blessed Lord, who of thy great Goodness and Mercy hast call'd me to this heavenly Feast, inspire me with all those holy and devout Affections which may render me a worthy Partaker of it. Give me a true penitent Heart for all my past Sins and Offences,

fences, and a firm Resolution, which no Temptation may be ever able to shake, of a new and uniform Obedience. Give me a lively Faith, that while I receive these visible Pledges of thy Love, I may taste and see how good and gracious my Lord is; that I may be united to thee in a more intimate and indissoluble manner; that thou mayst dwell by thy holy Spirit in me, and so preserve me continually by the Power of thy Grace, that I may ever live in thy true Faith and Fear, and at last die in thy Favour. I am now before the God, even the God of my Joy and Gladness: Blessed *Jesu*, my God, and my Lord, grant that upon this solemn and awful Occasion of approaching thee, all vain, impure, and irregular Thoughts may be banish'd out of my Mind; that while I am in Communion with thee, the Enemy may have no Advantage over me, nor any Temptation approach to hurt me; but that I may be wholly taken up with such

pious and divine Meditations as are most proper to qualify me to appear at this holy Sacrament of thy blessed Body and Blood, and so receive the saving Benefits of it. I am unworthy, by reason of my manifold Sins and Impieties, of the least of thy Mercies, but thou hast invited me to come to this blessed Memorial of thy Death, and him that cometh with any due Preparation of Mind, thou wilt in no wise cast out. Be favourable, O Lord, be favourable and gracious unto me. Unto thee do I lift up my Soul.
Amen.

Have Mercy upon me, O Lord, after thy great Goodness, according to the Multitude of thy Mercies, do away mine Offences.

Wash me thoroughly from my Wick- edness, and cleanse me from my Sin.

For I acknowledge my Faults, and my Sin is ever before me.

Turn thy Face from my Sins, and put out all my Misdeeds.

Make

Make me a clean Heart, O God,
and renew a right Spirit within me.

Cast me not away from thy Pre-
sence, and take not thy holy Spirit
from me.

O give me the Comfort of thy
Help again, and stablish me with thy
free Spirit.

My only Saviour and Redeemer, I
will not let thee go till thou hast blef-
sed me.

Speak but the Word, and thy Ser-
vant shall be made whole.

By thine Agony and bloody Sweat,
by thy Cross and Passion; by thy pre-
cious Death, Good Lord deliver me.

Immediately before we receive.

THOU hast said, O Lord, that he
who eateth thy Flesh and drink-
eth thy Blood, hath eternal Life. Be-
hold the Servant of the Lord; be it
unto me according to thy Word.

O Lamb of God, that takest away

the Sins of the World, grant me thy Peace.

O Lamb of God, that takest away the Sins of the World, have Mercy upon me.

Behold, O Lord, thy beloved Son in whom thou art well-pleased.

After receiving the Bread.

LET this thy crucify'd Body, O Lord, deliver me from the Body of Sin, that henceforth I may not serve Sin.

This is the spiritual Manna, the Bread of Life, which comes down from Heaven ; grant me thy Grace, O God, that by the Strength of it I may be enabled faithfully to do thy Will, and walk before thee during the whole future Course of my Life, in all well-pleasing.

After receiving the Cup.

GRANT, blessed *Jesu*, that thy Blood which was shed upon the Cross

Cross for me, may in all the real and spiritual Effects of it, be now communicated to me; and purge my Conscience from dead Works to serve the living God.

Hearken, O God, to the Cry of thy Son's Blood, which speaketh better Things than that of *Abel*.

A Prayer of Intercession, whilst others are receiving.

ALmighty and most merciful God, who hast made all Men, and hastest nothing that thou hast made, who willest not the Death of a Sinner, but rather that he should turn from his Sin, and be sav'd, I beseech for all sorts and Conditions of Men, that thou wouldst be pleas'd to make thy Ways known unto them, thy saving Health unto all Nations. More especially I pray for the good Estate of the Catholick Church, that it may be so guided and governed by thy good Spirit, that all who profess and call themselves Chri-

stians, may be led into the Way of Truth, and hold the Faith in Unity of Spirit, in the Bond of Peace, and in Righteousness of Life. In Mercy look down upon that Part of it which thy Right-hand hath planted, and hitherto so wonderfully preserv'd in this Nation. Compose our Differences, and heal our Breaches. Suffer not wicked Men to prosper in any pernicious Designs against our present Establishment, nor to set up their Banners for Tokens; but still continue to protect it from all Attempts both of open and secret Enemies. Bring into the Way of Truth, all such as have erred or are deceiv'd, and lead them in the Way everlasting. Give to all thy People Increase of Grace, that they may in their several Stations and Callings promote thy Honour and Glory, the Good of others, and their own Salvation. Let thy Blessing descend upon all those to whom I have a more immediate Relation, or am under any particular Engagement.

[*H ere*

[*Here you may name such Persons as are comprehended in this Petition.*]

Give thy Grace, O God, to all those especially, who are here celebrating that blessed Sacrament which thy Son instituted in Remembrance of his Death and Passion. Regard the Supplications of thy Servants; make them Partakers of all the blessed Effects of this holy Institution, and accept their bounden Duty and Service, not weighing their Merits, but pardoning their Offences. Blessed *Jesu*, our High-Priest, who wast sacrific'd for us, and whose Sacrifice is here in so lively a manner represented, intercede for us also, that whosoever here professes his Belief in thy Death, and in the Merits of it, may not perish, but have everlasting Life. To that end open the Eyes of their Understanding, and sanctify their Hearts, that they may both perceive and know what Things they ought to do, and also may have Grace and Strength faithfully to perform the same.

Grant

Grant this, O Lord, our only Saviour and Redeemer, God from everlasting World without End. *Amen.*

A Prayer, with Ejaculations after we have receiv'd the holy Sacrament, to be us'd in the Church or at Home.

O Blessed Lord, I have receiv'd the holy Sacrament of thy Body which was broken, and of thy Blood which was shed for me; grant, I beseech thee, that I may improve the Benefits of it more and more to thy Honour and Glory, and my own Salvation; that I may still grow in Grace, and in the Knowledge of my Lord and Saviour *Jesus Christ*: that I may go on to Perfection; that I may be so truly thankful for this and all other thy heavenly Dispensations, as better to deserve the Continuance, or if it be thy gracious Pleasure, the Encrease of thy spiritual Favours to me: So that thy Loving-kindness and Mercy may follow

follow me all the Days of my Life;
and that I may ever remain in the num-
ber of thy faithful and elect Servants.

Amen.

Praise the Lord, O my Soul, whilst
I live will I praise the Lord, yea, as
long as I have any Being, will I sing
Praises unto my God.

Praise the Lord, O my Soul, and
forget not all his Benefits; who forgi-
veth all thy Sins, and healeth all thy
Infirmities.

Who is a God like unto him, that
pardoneth Iniquity, and passeth by
Transgression.

He healeth those that are broken in
Heart, and giveth Medicines to heal
their Sicknes.

The Lord is full of Compassion
and Mercy, Long-suffering, and great
Goodness.

He openeth his Hand and satisfieth
the Desire of every living Thing; but
his Delights are with the Sons of Men.

For look how high the Heaven is in
compa-

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comparison of the Earth, so great is his Mercy towards them that fear him.

Look how wide also the East is from the West, so far hath he set our Sins from us.

Surely then it is meet to be said unto God, If I have done Iniquity, I will do so no more.

Thou art my God, and I will thank thee; thou art my God, and I will praise thee.

Now Blessing, Honour, Glory, and Power be unto him that sitteth upon the Throne, and unto the Lamb for ever and ever.



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Occasion of the D E A T H

O F H E R

Late Excellent M A J E S T Y

Queen *A N N E*.

By R I C. F I D D E S, B. D.

Chaplain to the Right Honourable
the Earl of Oxford.

L O N D O N :

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